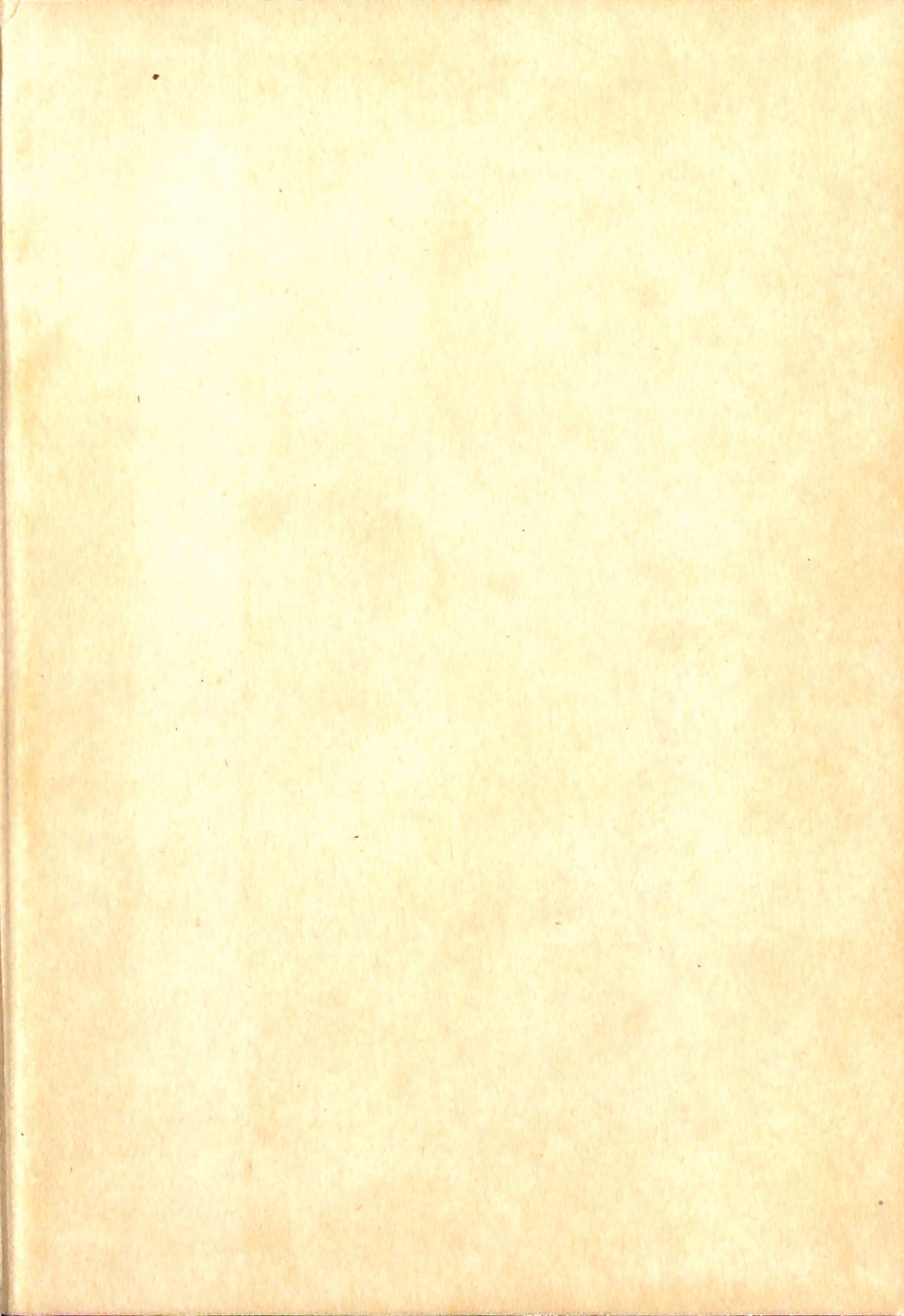
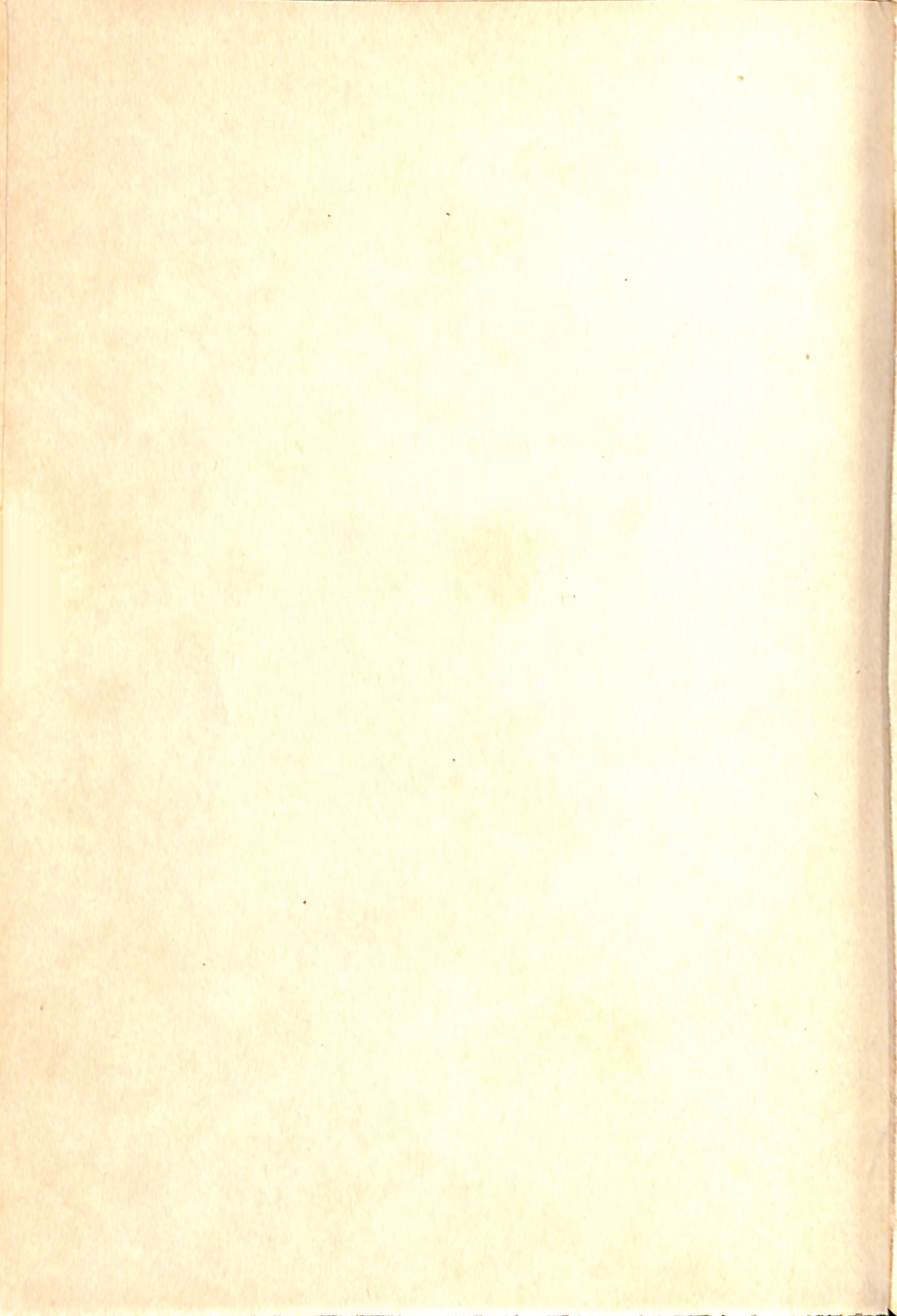




Maud Howe Elliott





LORD BYRON'S HELMET





GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

BY
MAUD HOWE ELLIOTT

With Illustrations



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

1927

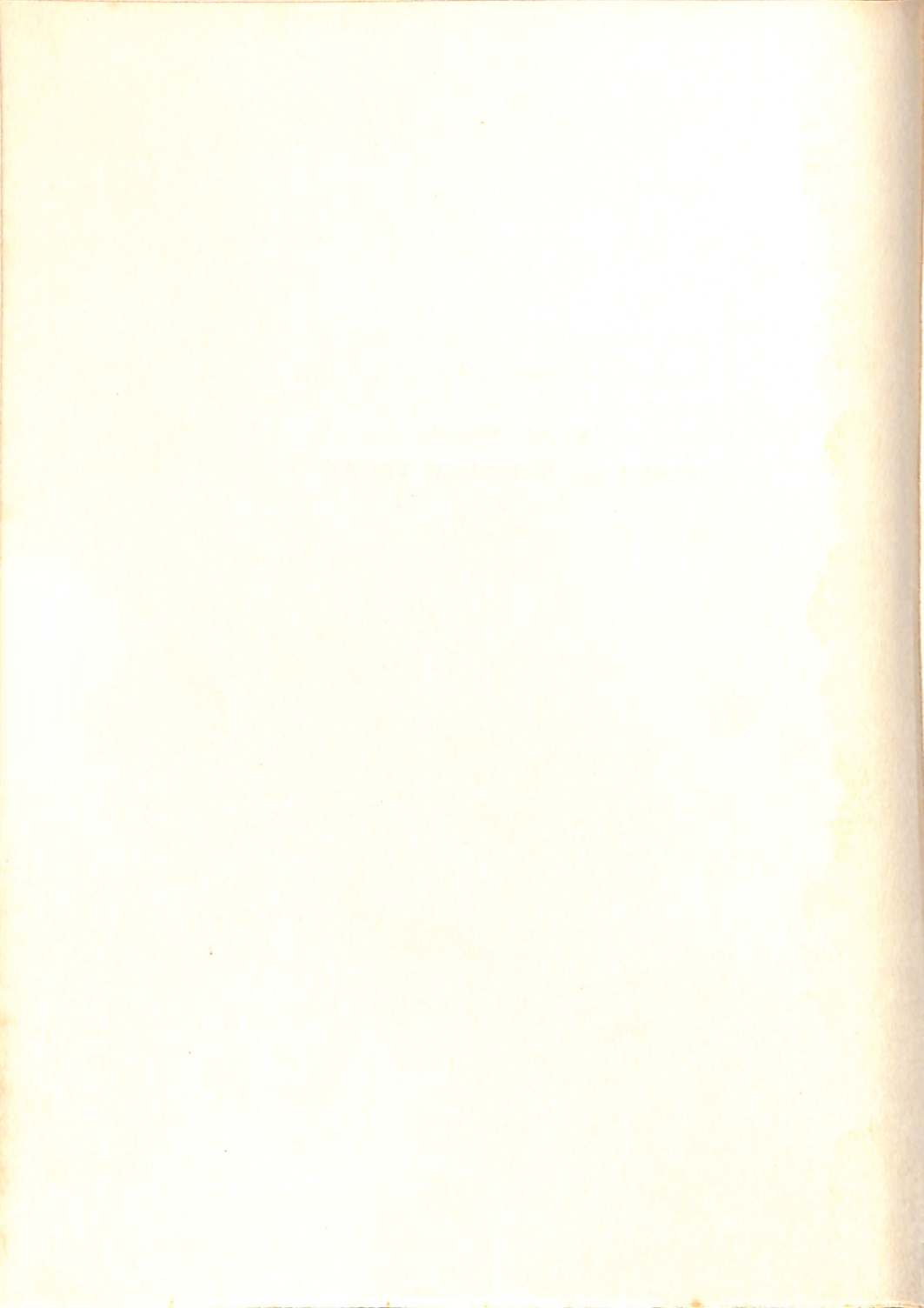
COPYRIGHT, 1927, BY MAUD HOWE ELLIOTT

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE · MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.

TO MY FRIENDS

LINDA AND RODERICK TERRY



*“Deeds are the sons of heaven,” it is said,
And words the mortal daughters of mankind.
What Byron did was as a heaven’s son;
But by some high earth-daughter it was born
And by earth’s daughters it will still live on,
“Survive himself, his tomb and all that’s his.”*

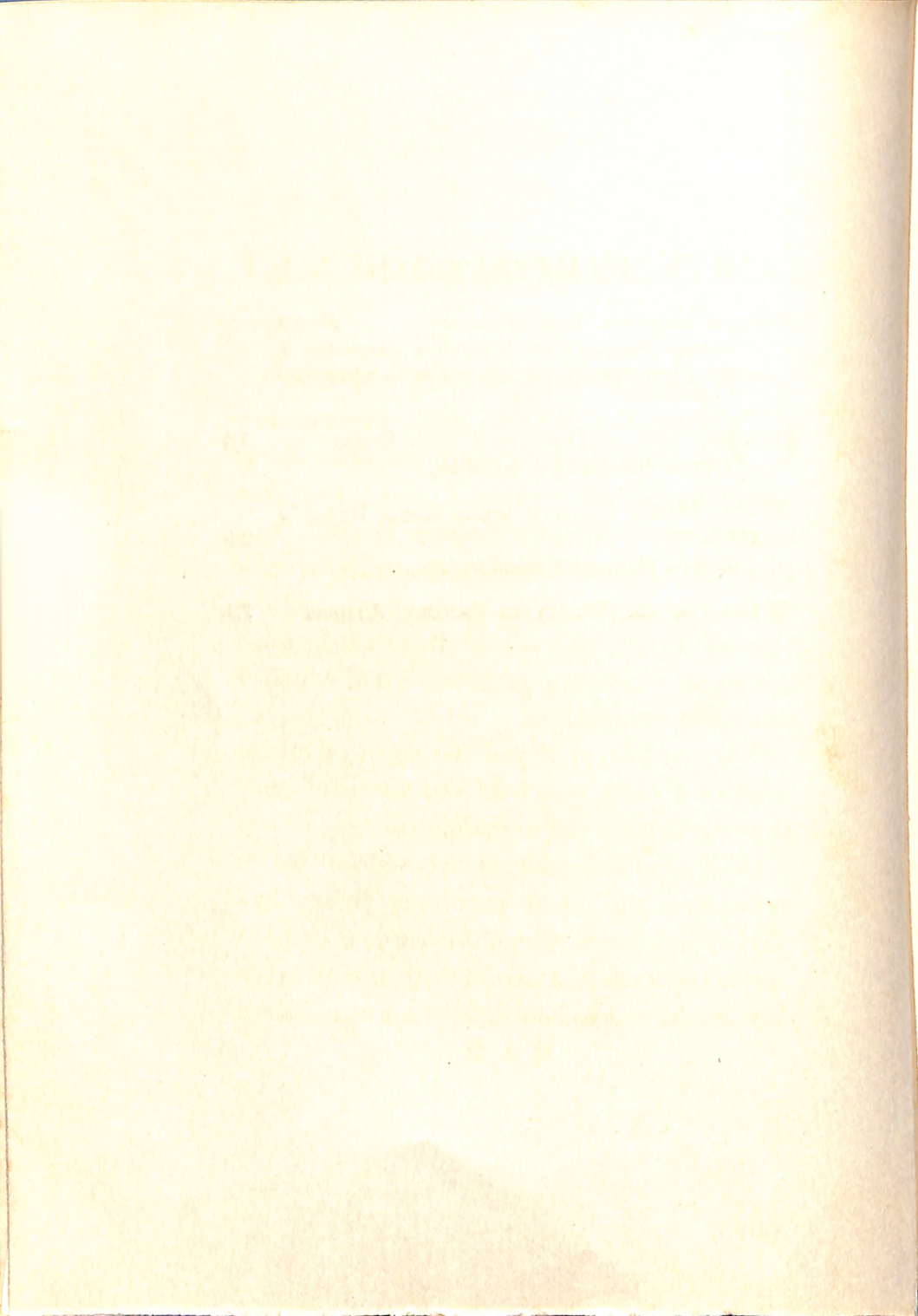
JOHN FINLEY

CONTENTS

I. HOW THE HELMET CAME TO AMERICA	1
II. HOW THE HELMET RETURNED TO GREECE	30

ILLUSTRATIONS

- GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON *Frontispiece*
From a lithograph of 1825 after a sketch then in
the possession of Count Demetrius Deladezima, of
Cephalonia.
- SAMUEL GRIDLEY HOWE IN GREEK DRESS 12
From a portrait by John Elliott.
- MAUD HOWE ELLIOTT WITH LORD BYRON'S
HELMET 24
From a photograph taken in Athens.
- TEMPLE OF THE WINGLESS VICTORY, ATHENS 72



LORD BYRON'S HELMET

I

HOW THE HELMET CAME TO AMERICA

ON the 19th of April, 1924, the centenary of Lord Byron's death was observed at Missolonghi, throughout Greece, and that larger Greece — the Philhellenic World. The Prime Minister of Greece laid a laurel wreath at the foot of the Byron monument, and Sir Rennell Rodd, one of the British delegates, delivered a stirring address, from which I quote one sentence:

'At the bier of Byron the spirit of liberty kindled a torch which all the forces of reaction could not avail to extinguish.'

As I read his address, I could not fail to remember the great part that Byron had played in Greece, where the last and perhaps the noblest effort of his life had culminated in his death, and to conclude that it was indeed

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

his death which aroused Europe and finally brought about the independence of Greece.

In my family, the Greek Revolution had a personal interest, since my father was one of those 'foreigners' who took part in it. He handed down to his children his enthusiasm for the Hellene cause, and one relic which we deeply cherished. Two years after the Byron celebration, there came into the possession of the heirs of my brother, Dr. Henry Marion Howe, this most treasured of our family possessions — Lord Byron's helmet.

The story of Byron's love for Greece is probably familiar to my readers, but I may be forgiven if I remind them of it, in order to explain my pilgrimage.

In 1821, Byron was living in Italy, an exile from his beloved England — the greatest poet of his age — tired, fragile, disillusioned! There he looked back upon his earlier years with keen regret for the lost opportunities which they held, and with a glow of feeling for their enthusiasms, many of which he had

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

lost, but one of which he had retained. In 1809 he had gone, in his famous 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,' to Greece, and in Athens at that time he had spent one of the happiest years of his life. In 1811, after his return to England, he wrote to a friend, 'I have no plans; sometimes I think of the East again and dearly beloved Greece.' Later he planned to buy one of the Greek islands and to settle there near the 'skyish top of blue Olympus.' The second canto of 'Childe Harold' is full of his love for Greece.

'Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
And all the Muse's tales seem truly told.'

But mingled with his admiration was his grief that the spirit of the ancient Hellenes seemed dead.

'Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth!
Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great!'

The outbreak of the Greek War of Independence in the spring of 1821 gave him re-

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

newed hope, and by November of that year he declared, 'I mean to return to Greece, and shall in all probability die there.' For over a year he was kept from carrying out his resolution, but in February, 1823, encouraged by the Greek Committee in London, he began to prepare to join the revolutionists. After arranging for the necessary arms and supplies which he took with him, he chartered the *Hercules*, 'a collier-built tub of 120 tons, round-bottomed, bluff-bowed, and a dull sailer.'

A month before sailing he wrote to Trelawny: 'You must have heard that I am going to Greece — why do you not come to me? I want your aid, and I am exceedingly anxious to see you. Pray, come, for I am at last determined to go to Greece: it is the only place I was ever contented in. . . . They all say I can be of use to Greece; I do not know how — nor do they; but, at all events, let us go!' In answer to his letter, Trelawny joined him. A third member of their party was

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Count Gamba, a brother of the Countess Guiccioli. For all three, Byron ordered uniforms and helmets. Moore says in his 'Life of Bryon,' 'Among other preparations for his expedition, he ordered three splendid helmets to be made—with his never forgotten crest engraved upon them.' Gamba's bore the image of Athene, the fighter, in the front. Trelawny's, like Byron's, was of Homeric proportions. Below the plume was his coat of arms, and his motto, 'Crede Biron.' Byron had designed them, and his ideas were carried out by a skillful artificer, Giacomo Aspe, of Genoa.

Finally, in July, 1823, everything was ready, and Byron, the most superstitious of men, consented to set sail for the greatest adventure of his life on a Sunday, a day which he had always regarded as unlucky, the 13th! And when first they could not sail because of the calm, and then they had to put back because of the storm, he remarked that 'he considered a bad beginning a favorable omen.'

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

A strange statement when he had already said to the Blessingtons, 'I shall never return from Greece,' and even while waiting to reëmbark he said to Count Gamba, 'Where shall we be in a year?' The foreboding of personal tragedy could not blind his eyes to 'The dream that Greece might yet be free.' Finally, on the evening of July the 16th, they set off, and, after some inevitable delays and a voyage made hazardous by storms and the Turkish blockade, they joined the Greek leader Mavrocordato at Missolonghi.

There Byron found the revolutionaries in dire need of both training and supplies, and he threw himself into their service, organizing an artillery corps, and providing the treasury with money, his own together with the sums supplied by the Committee in London. With the Greeks he underwent discomfort and actual privation. His health, which was already poor, began to fail completely, but he kept himself at work. By April 9, 1824, he was seriously ill. He was preoccupied with the

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

thought of his death, but occasionally thought and hoped that he might recover. The circumstances of his illness made the proper care, which might have saved him, impossible. Parry, a soldier of fortune who had recently come to Missolonghi, wrote: 'His habitation was weather-tight, but that was nearly all the comfort his deplorable room afforded him. . . . The pestilent sirocco was blowing a hurricane, and the rain was falling with almost tropical violence. In our apartment was the calm of coming death, and outside was the storm desolating the spot around us.' The two doctors who attended him were unable to help him.

By the 18th of April Byron had abandoned all hope. To Dr. Milligen he said: 'Your efforts to preserve my life will be in vain. Die I must: I feel it. Its loss I do not lament; for to terminate my weary existence I came to Greece. My wealth, my abilities, I devoted to her cause. Well, there is my life to her.' In the afternoon of that Easter Sunday, he lost consciousness, and in his last fevered

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

dreams he fancied that he was leading a charge against the Turks, and doubtless he saw himself in that prophetic vision wearing his helmet and bearing his sword. This vision on his deathbed was indeed prophetic, as were the words he cried aloud in his delirium, now in Italian, now in English: 'Forward, forward, courage! Follow me, be not afraid!'

Later he became sensible, and tried to give his last messages to his servant Fletcher. He could not, and in despair called out, 'My wife! my child! my sister!' After taking some medicine he became calmer, and in the evening said to those who watched beside him, 'I want to go to sleep now.' He was unconscious all that night, and the next day he died. At the very moment of his passing there raged one of the most awful thunderstorms ever witnessed. When the Greeks heard of his death they cried: 'The great man is dead!' The next morning the cannons boomed their last salute. Stanhope, at Salona, wrote to John Bowring: 'England has lost her bright-

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

est genius — Greece her noblest friend . . .
Had I the disposal of his ashes, I would place
them in the Temple of Theseus, or in the
Parthenon at Athens.'

How different the actual funeral as described
in a letter of Count Gamba's!

'The coffin was a crude chest of wood,' he
writes. 'A black mantle served for a pall,
and over it we placed a helmet, a sword, and
a crown of laurel.'

Byron's body was later taken to England,
and was buried in the vault at Hucknall
Torkard. Shortly before his death he wrote
these lines, almost the last he ever composed:

'The Sword, the Banner, and the Field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

'Awake! (Not Greece—she *is* awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home! . . .

'If thou regret'st thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honourable death

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Is here: — up to the Field, and give
Away thy breath!

‘Seek out — less often sought than found —
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy Rest.’

Perhaps he had a prescience that his failing voice would be heard all round the world, and that those ringing words would fire the hearts of men and women yet unborn, as they did my father's.

A few days after Byron's death, a young American doctor arrived in Greece to offer his services to the Hellenic cause. Born in Boston less than twenty years after the close of the American Revolution, he was brought up to love the name of Liberty, and to glory in the spirit of freedom which was then sweeping over the world. Since the career of this young man, my father, may not be familiar to the readers of to-day, I shall give here a translation of an article which appeared in a

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Greek newspaper, 'Le Messenger d'Athenes,' on June 23, 1926:

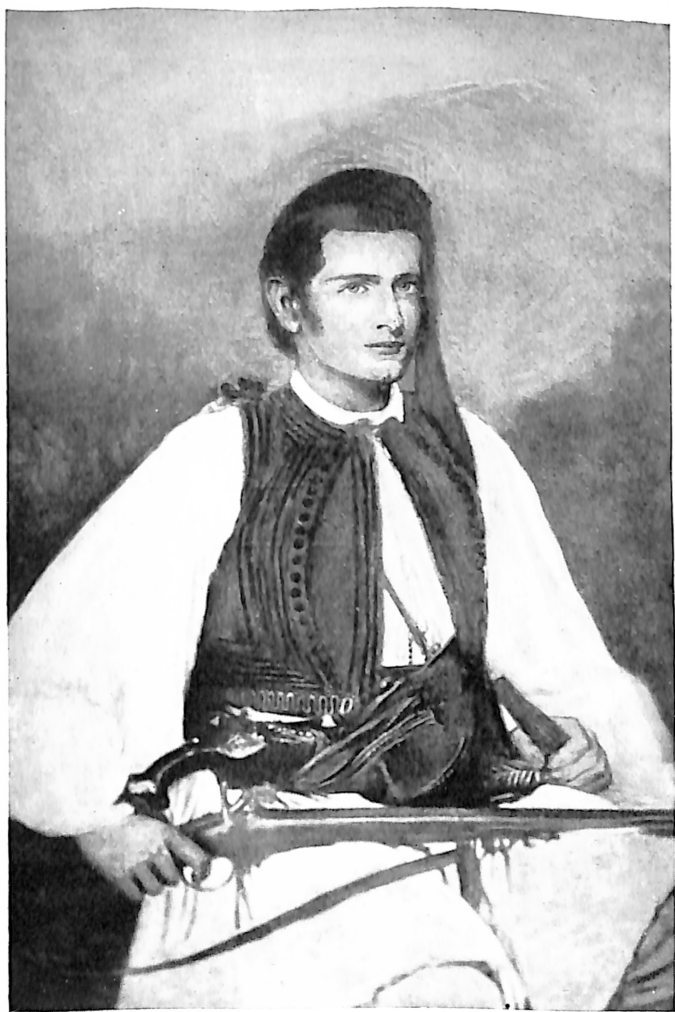
'The present generation does not, perhaps, know the name of Samuel Howe as it was known by the two preceding generations, but in the history of the Greek Revolution and in the Cretan struggle for Liberty, the name of Howe is written in letters of gold. Because if it is true that the great confederation of the United States of America was the first to officially manifest its sympathy for the cause of Hellenic Independence by an Act of Congress, and by meetings which brought together the best of the American people, it is not less true that Samuel Howe was one of the most ardent defenders of the Greek cause in America.

'Howe was born in 1801, and had only just finished his course at the University and commenced to practice his profession as a physician when the Greek Revolution broke out. The admiration of a man of science for the ancient civilization and for the Hellenic culture; the Americans' love of liberty; the An-

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

glo-Saxons' sympathy for all those who are carrying on an unequal battle for the right—all these sentiments aroused by the burning lyre of Byron—forced Howe to throw himself with ardor into the Philhellenic movement in America. The annals of this epoch bear witness that, running parallel to the eloquent speeches of the great political orators of the day, Everett, Webster, Clay, Halleck, and others, the ardent enthusiasm of Samuel Howe and his indefatigable activity did much to arouse public opinion in America, and, above all, to raise great subscriptions which were used to send large quantities of food, of clothing, and even of ammunition to the patriots fighting in Greece. Howe chartered a large sailing vessel which he filled with all sorts of things necessary for the Greeks in their struggle and arrived in Greece in the summer¹ of 1824. His grief was very great when he learned that he would never see Byron, who had died at Missolonghi a few weeks before his

¹ Really the winter of 1824-25.



SAMUEL GRIDLEY HOWE IN GREEK DRESS



LORD BYRON'S HELMET

arrival. He decided that he also would offer his personal services in the struggle. During six years he worked as Surgeon-in-Chief to the Greek Army, while still carrying on his propaganda for the Hellenic cause among his compatriots — a propaganda which brought to Greece, denuded of everything, great cargoes of provisions and other supplies.

‘When the Independence of Greece was recognized, Howe returned to America, but his love for Greece never ceased. When the great Cretan Insurrection of 1866-69 broke out, Howe, although he had already passed his sixtieth year, threw himself again into the struggle for Greece. He gathered together with great rapidity a very large sum of money and came to Athens where he organized by means of a Greek-American Committee a vast system of relief work for the Cretan women and children who by thousands had taken refuge in Greece. He was not satisfied with merely clothing and feeding them. He organized as well excellent schools for the children

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

of the refugees, and workrooms for the Cretan women, thereby winning the gratitude of this unhappy people, and of the whole of Greece.

‘Such is Howe, and such are his services to Greece. In Crete to-day they still pronounce his name with emotion because there are still among them many old men and women who in their childhood were educated at the schools for refugees established at Athens and Syra.’

This, in brief, is the story of my father's work for Greece, but I should like to tell something of his experiences there, since his work is the source of my narrative.

On his arrival, fresh from the peace and order of New England, Howe found Greece in chaos. The Revolution was well under way, but the revolutionists were in dire straits. They had not only a powerful enemy to cope with, but among themselves they were split into factions. The soldiers were wild and undisciplined. It was impossible to supply them

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

adequately with food, and for months they were without pay. Howe's primary purpose was to serve with the army as a surgeon, but he frequently was called upon to take an active part in the fighting. His diary and his letters home tell of his life at that time, and although they have been largely quoted in Mrs. Richards's book, 'Letters and Journals of Samuel Gridley Howe,' I shall draw upon them here. Her book is now out of print, and, at all events, history has to be retold every twenty years for each new generation.

One of his first letters describes the situation in which he found himself.

NAPOLI DI ROMANIA, *March, 1825*

MY DEAR FATHER:

My commission as army surgeon is filled out, but I shall not enter upon my duties until the army commences active operations, which I hope will be in a short time; as for my salary, I have nothing, and care nothing about it; the government are not able to feed and clothe their poor, suffering soldiers, and

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

I have not the heart to demand money, when I can support myself by private practice. As for this last, I have as much money as I wish, and I am told that I ought to make money, but I let my patients pay as they choose; and paying me money I find is like pouring water into a sieve; my money runs away as fast almost as it comes in; I mean to retrench, but shall not pinch myself. I shall see and learn all that I can, live well, and not worry myself about the future. Good fortune, a knowledge of anatomy, and a steady hand, have carried me successfully through several surgical operations, which have got me some fame; this day I amputated part of a hand, and this week I am to cut a tumor from the face of a merchant; I will venture to say that I shall perform more surgical operations in one year than any surgeon in Boston, except at the hospital; so you see that this knowledge of surgery alone will compensate me for everything.

I shall not attempt to give you an account

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

of my way of life in this strange land, since you will see Captain Smith, who will give you a particular account; you can hardly conceive how glad I was to see him; his vessel being the first American that has shown the 'star-spangled banner' in a port of free Greece. I have clothes enough to last one year, at the end of which time, if not before, I shall probably put on the Greek dress. I am only sorry that I did not bring out more books with me, particularly medical ones, and should Captain Smith return I shall try to make arrangements to get more. At least send me all the books I left at home, particularly Pinkerton's voyages and travels, Shakespeare's plays, and what others may be useful or interesting.

As for the affairs of the Greeks, I do not hesitate to say that they will turn out successful; although at this moment the Turks are making formidable preparations. But the Greeks are full of courage and confidence, and in their own wild and daring way will

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

contrive to manage any number of men that can be brought against them. They have nothing like a regular army, in fact the nature of the country will not admit of an army to manœuvre to any advantage; it is rocky and mountainous, and in many parts it is impossible to pass through the country, except by narrow defiles which will admit but one man at a time.

The Greek soldiers are ill-clothed, worse fed, and paid, as one may say, nothing at all; they are ignorant, not one in twenty being able to read or write; but they are very shrewd and cunning by nature; active as goats in their mountains, and brave, if you will let them fight in their own way, which is like that of our Indians, firing from behind the rocks and trees.

Their sailors may be said with truth to be equal to any in the world; in fact I was told by one of our navy officers that they are decidedly the best sailors he has ever seen. They have always beat the Turks in the

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

naval engagements; I have perfect confidence in their superiority. . . .

There are here, at this time, four Americans, Lieutenant General Jervis, Captain Miller (Jonathan P. Miller, of Randolph, Vermont, a soldier of the United States Army), Mr. A——, and His Excellency, myself.

He had not long to wait for the 'active operations' of which he speaks. A month later he wrote in his journal:

Thursday, April 20, 1825. 'Came in a man this morning from the field of battle. His account is probably exaggerated, but he says that the Turks attacked the Greeks, cut up one thousand men, and killed Hadji Christo, Kosta Botzaris, and two other brave generals. Started on the route; in about an hour met a wounded man upon a horse, a ball having passed through the thick part of his thigh. A little road was filled with soldiers retreating, their captains having been killed or missing. The roar of cannon becomes more and more

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

distinct. We are in sight of the sea, of the castle of Koron, and are within fifteen miles of the field of action, and I begin to find that I must fight as a common soldier or retreat, which I will not do. My medicines are behind at Tripolitza. I have instruments and bandages only, but those in no order; no arrangements for the wounded, and, since I cannot be useful in my profession, why, here goes life and soul for Greece and liberty!

‘It is all one — die on a field of battle or on a bed; and could I choose, I would rather my soul should with one pang, one bound, escape control, than to lie for weeks upon a sick bed, with all the pain and misery of disease, augmented by the anticipation of death.’

Howe took part in the skirmish which followed, and in many others. A little later he writes:

Saturday, June 25, Napoli. ‘All is in confusion; my friends and countrymen, Jervis and Miller, have just departed for the scene

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

of action; perhaps we have shaken hands for the last time. Mavrocordato is here. . . .

‘They are all in arms around me, and I must start to my duty. . . .

‘Everything is ready; we have received two pieces of cannon from Napoli, have built additional breastworks, and have eight hundred soldiers; since it was yesterday defended with two hundred, we hope to give them a warm reception. At twelve I went round the place; the soldiers were all lying behind their breastworks snoring away most soundly, each man with his head upon his musquet and his pistols in his belt. Pretty soon we were alarmed; Jervis who is continually wandering about, had discovered some horse close upon us. In a moment every man was up, the musquets presented over the ramparts, all eyes were strained to meet some mark for fire; but it proved to be only a small scouting party, who came to reconnoitre. Soon all sank into stillness. I threw myself upon the ground with my greatcoat, and soon forgot Turks and

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Greeks, blood and bullets, until (June 27th) the first glimmer of morning aroused me. I started to my feet to catch a sight of the enemy, but none attacked. I could plainly see their columns in the direction of Argos. About ten o'clock Miller, Tennent, and myself were sitting upon the top of a stone building about twenty feet high, when the Greeks, who were below, cried out violently to us, "Come down." Just as I began to understand them, and had risen to my feet, I felt the roof going in, the walls tottering, and in an instant I was precipitated downward with a load of rocks and stones above and around me. . . . Soon I was extricated, without having been seriously hurt.'

Howe's adventures alternated with his duties as a surgeon. After one battle he writes:

'Work began to thicken on my hands; the slightly wounded, the dying, and the dead were alike brought in. . . . During this time I have dressed more difficult wounds than I should have an opportunity of seeing in Boston

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

in years, and performed more operations than might have fallen to my lot during my life had I stayed at home. I could not weary.'

For six years he thus devoted his life to the Greek cause on the field and in improvised hospitals. In 1829 he returned to the United States for a short time to raise money, and in the same year went back to Greece again. When, in 1830, his work there was done, the freedom of Greece was established and the War of the Revolution won. In 1831 he had again returned to the United States, and had taken up the work in Boston which was to occupy the greater part of his life. With him, as a precious reminder of the Greek War and the great poet who had done so much to bring about its success, he brought back Lord Byron's helmet.

We know from what my father told us that he bought Lord Byron's helmet at a sale of the poet's possessions at Poros. We know also that tradition says that the treacherous Trelawny sold Byron's effects after his death.

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

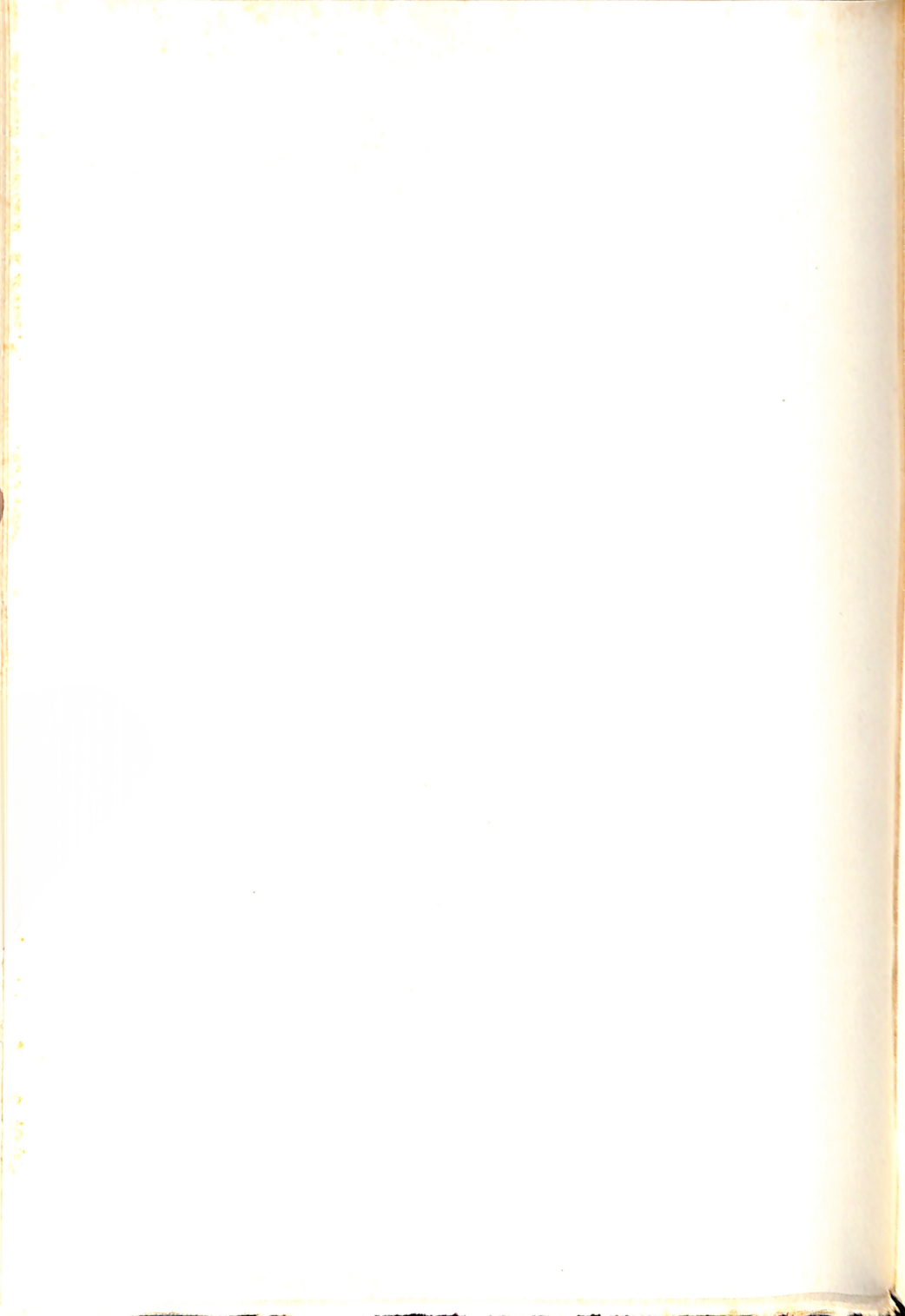
F. B. Sanborn writes of this sale, 'Howe, Colonel Miller, and George Finley were present, and Howe obtained the poet's helmet while Colonel Miller had the gold-mounted sword.'

From my earliest childhood I remember this romantic piece of armor as standing a sort of trophy in our old home at 'Green Peace.' Later, in all the many homes we occupied it always held an honorable place among the family heirlooms. After my mother's death the helmet passed to my brother, Dr. Henry Marion Howe, and once more was the chief ornament of the long drawing-room of the second 'Green Peace' at Bedford Hills, New York, my brother's country home. My sister Florence Howe Hall, in her 'Memories Grave and Gay,' writes her impressions of the helmet, at our old home 'Green Peace' in South Boston:

'As you came in the main door of entrance and looked down the long hallway of the house, you saw directly opposite to you By-



MAUD HOWE ELLIOTT WITH LORD BYRON'S HELMET



LORD BYRON'S HELMET ,

ron's helmet, fitting symbol of the man who dwelt there. My father had hung it up, as a returned pilgrim did his staff and cockle-hat in the olden time, or a warrior his sword and shield.

'True, father had never worn that or any other helmet. Yet the noble example and stirring verses of the poet had much to do with young Howe's sailing for Greece, where for seven long years he helped carry out the work which Byron had begun. When he at length left ancient Hellas, she was once more free! Thus the helmet reminded those who knew, not only of the poet's devotion to the cause for which he died, but also of the work of his admirer and successor, Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, the "Chevalier," as he was called by his intimates

"In the prison of the Kaiser
By the barricades of Seine,"

in Greece, and later, in slavery-ridden America, had he striven for human freedom.

'The helmet not only reminded of past

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

deeds; it was also an incentive to generous efforts in the present. My father was deeply interested in all attempts to throw off the yoke of kings and welcomed to "Green Peace" political exiles and refugees from many countries.

"Wherever rise the peoples,
Wherever sinks a throne,
The throbbing heart of Freedom finds
An answer in his own."*

Thus it came about that we, the Howe children, were brought up under the shadow of Byron's helmet, the helmet of the Philhellene. And now, in this time after the Great War, all America is thrilling to the magic words that we were taught to lisp from the cradle — "the cause of humanity," "the brotherhood of man!" These phrases that we now hear everywhere seem to me wonderful echoes of that far-away time when Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, was welcomed at "Green Peace,"

* A stanza from 'The Hero,' by Whittier, written about Howe.

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

as Joffre has been welcomed in New York and Boston!

The helmet, like some magic helm of romance, was a magnet to which all who came to "Green Peace" were irresistibly drawn. Visitors were always interested in Byron's helmet. They sometimes tried to put it on, but seldom succeeded. The poet, it will be remembered, had a very small though beautiful head. Sister Laura was the only one of the Howe family who could wear it. She and sister Julia were the most poetical of the children. A tintype is still in existence showing the former, at the age of fourteen, crowned with the Byron helmet, her long hair flowing over her shoulders.

The Greek War of Independence (1822-29) was a comparatively recent event in the fifties, and people often spoke of it and of the Philhellenes. My father looked much younger than he really was, and occasionally, when asked about his share in the struggle, he would jestingly say "Oh, it was my *father*

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

who fought in Greece.' His children knew something of his early career, but he never told us of his deeds of heroism. That would have seemed too much like boasting for a reserved New-Englander.

If we complained of the food, he would sometimes remind us that we should be grateful for it and tell us of the strange articles which had constituted the diet of his companions and himself. Roasted wasps did not sound very attractive, even after the removal of the stings. As for sorrel, we used to sample the plants that grew wild—always pitying poor Papa for having been obliged to eat such sour stuff. We could well imagine how tough donkey's flesh might be, from our encounter with our own José, whose back and sides appeared to be made of iron.

Of the primitive ways and ideas of the Greeks at that time he would occasionally tell us. Great was their astonishment because he could remove one of his teeth and replace it. Wheeled vehicles were unknown, and one con-

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

structed by his faithful follower (a man whose life my father had saved) caused much surprise. As for tea, if you invited a Greek to partake of a cup he would reply, 'No, thank you, I am not *sick*.'

For almost a hundred years, Byron's helmet was treasured in our family. To all of us it seemed a tangible link between us and Greece and Byron. Then, too, it became a symbol of the courage and gallantry of our distinguished father. On the other hand, we realized that it was precious not alone to us, and that some day it should take its place among the other Byron relics.

II

HOW THE HELMET RETURNED TO GREECE

IN April, 1926, my brother's widow died, and on learning that the Byron helmet was to come to me and the other heirs, I took counsel with my sister, Mrs. Richards, and the children of my late sister, Mrs. Hall. I knew that it had been my mother's wish that eventually this precious relic should be given to Greece. My brother, I knew, had been in correspondence with Demetrius Kalopothakes concerning it. When I announced to the others that in my view the time had come for this gift to be made, there was but one opinion on the matter.

One of the things my mother taught me was, 'If you want a thing done, you must do it yourself,' and so with all possible speed I prepared to take the helmet of Lord Byron to Athens. Mr. Daniel Geer, nephew of my sister-in-law, took the greatest pains to hurry

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

the necessary legal proceedings, so that the helmet might be 'released,' and that I might speed upon my way while there was yet time. He met me in New York with the precious helmet which had sometimes figured in the mimic battles of the children of our family when scenes from the siege of Troy were enacted. Do I remember it upon the head of my sister Laura when she took the part of Agamemnon? I cannot be sure of this, but I know that I have seen it worn by at least two generations of Philhellenes while rendering the great scenes of Homer.

The helmet was packed in a fashionable, modern hatbox. As the rest of my luggage was rather old and travel-worn, wherever I went this fine hatbox seemed to attract the attention of stewards, porters, and, worst of all, custom-house officials, so that I was in constant dread lest something might happen to it, and always slept with it close beside me.

I sailed from New York on the 26th of May, 1926, on the Cunard steamer *Aquitania*. Amid

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

that vast horde of passengers I saw little likelihood of meeting any one who would have any knowledge of my errand or any sympathy with it. In that enormous floating hotel, with its four great elevators, its closed-in decks transformed into ballrooms or conservatories filled with blooming plants, I found myself ill at ease. Sitting in the big library surrounded by handsome bookcases filled with the regulation classics, topped by bronze busts of great authors from Plato to Shakespeare, it often seemed impossible to me that I was at sea or that this was a ship, for fortunately our passage was of the smoothest. To see the ocean at all, I was obliged to ascend to the top deck, and I fancy that some of the passengers did not even do so much.

Two days before we reached Southampton I chanced to make the acquaintance of a quiet lady who had greatly attracted me as I saw her seated day after day playing solitaire. We fell into talk; later on she introduced her husband, the Honorable William Pember Reeves.

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

It was not long before I realized that Mr. Reeves was an ardent Philhellene, and had been for many years the President of the British Philhellenic Society.

I had often said to myself, sitting alone on the deck, 'There is no one in this whole ship's company who cares anything about me, or my father, or Lord Byron, or the helmet.' Mr. Reeves proved to know all about my father; to be deeply interested in my errand; to be able to help me solve the problem of how I had best make the journey to Greece and who I had best see in Athens. The night before we landed, Mrs. Reeves asked me to show them the helmet, and for the only time between New York and Athens I took it out of its case for these sympathetic friends to see. This meeting with Mr. Reeves was the first in a series of almost providential occurrences in the story of my travels.

After five days in England and a few more in Paris, I made arrangements for my journey, and at half-past eight on the evening of

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

June 10th took my place in the *wagon lit* of the Orient Express. My compartment had a comfortable bed and plenty of air. The *wagon lit* is made up of a series of compartments with a small washroom between each two. The compartment has two berths, but I was fortunate enough to be alone in mine. Throughout this trip I made it a rule to dispense with all possible extra service. On one occasion only I allowed the porter of the hotel to accompany me to the train. I wanted to make sure that I had not lost the habit of travelling independently. I trusted nobody with the exception of one tourist agent. Next time I shall make no exceptions and shall trust no tourist agent.

Shortly before the time of departure, when I had made myself comfortable in my compartment, the tall, distinguished-looking guard came to look at the ticket which had been issued to me by a well-known tourist agency. He seemed puzzled, and finally exclaimed:

‘Madam, this reservation is for the 10th

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

of August and to-day is the 10th of June.'

'Well,' I said, 'that is a mistake either of your company or the agent. You seem to have plenty of room in this train. Is there any reason I should not remain on board?'

'No reason at all, madam, and I hope you will do so, but I shall have to ask you to pay me eight hundred and fifty-five francs for the sleeping-car accommodations from Paris to Athens.'

'And if I refuse to pay you?'

'There are but two ways, madam. You must either descend from this train in ten minutes or pay me eight hundred and fifty-five francs.'

'I am not sure that I have so much money with me.'

'Then I regret to say that you must get out of the train, and you have but seven minutes to decide.'

I rapidly counted my money, and found that after I paid the required sum I should be left with fifteen francs, French money, at that

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

time equivalent to forty-five cents, American money, to pay for food, mineral water, and incidental expenses of a three days' trip! I walked the length of the car in search of some English or American passenger, but found only Greeks and barbarians. The minutes were passing. I had made all my arrangements to meet my friends in Athens; engaged my room at the hotel; given up my room in Paris—could I turn back?

There was a moment of awful indecision — my eye lit upon the box containing the helmet — something flamed up in my inner consciousness. I was no longer a lonely woman among strangers starting upon a long journey. I was my father's daughter bound on his errand, to take back to Hellas this relic of her most illustrious friend. I counted out the money without a tremor, but five minutes later when the train started I burst into tears.

The guard was a kindly man. '*Ne pleurez pas, madame,*' he said soothingly. "

'I think you would cry,' I replied, 'if you

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

had only fifteen francs to carry you from Paris to Athens.'

I made my plan: At the Swiss frontier the next morning I would invest my fifteen francs in bread and bottled water and hope that this nourishment would keep me alive until I reached Greece. I went to bed and managed to sleep.

In the dim hours of the night I was roused by a strange voice at my shoulder; the compartment was flooded with light; and the following question was put to me in a curious singsong voice, '*Vous n'avez pas plus que cinq mille francs en billets de banc?*'

I answered, 'No! Not more than fifteen francs,' and turned over and went to sleep again.

About five o'clock in the morning when I wakened there drifted into my mind the memory of an interview with my friend, Dr. Lawrence Henderson, of Harvard, a few days before I sailed. After much sound advice the professor wound up with these words:

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

‘Be sure and take your money in American Express checks.’

‘I shall do no such thing,’ I replied. ‘I have travelled all my life with a Brown Shipley letter of credit, and I am not going to take up with any such new-fangled notion.’

The professor persisted—he is an obstinate man. ‘Take your letter of credit if you want, but as a favor to me buy two hundred dollars’ worth of American Express checks.’

I refused, but the professor had his way in the end. I bought the American Express checks, threw them in the bottom of my dressing-case, and entirely forgot their existence. In the dim dawn the comforting assurance that I had obeyed my friend’s injunction came to my mind. At the Swiss frontier I descended, and at the money-changer’s booth laid in a sufficient supply of Swiss, French, Italian, and Greek notes to take me to Athens.

At breakfast in the dining-car I noticed a slender, good-looking young man who I felt sure was an Anglo-Saxon. In the course of

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

the day we made acquaintance. He proved to be Mr. James Orr Denby, nephew of our late Secretary of the Navy, and attached to the American Legation in Athens. Mr. Denby was on his way back to his post. From the time we made acquaintance he took entire charge of me and my belongings, and from that moment until the hour I left Athens he was my devoted guide, philosopher, and friend. This encounter with Denby and the finding of the forgotten American Express checks are two more of those instances which link themselves into a chain of happy memories of how my way was made easy, and how friends seemed to be raised up for me at every step.

The three days' journey on the Orient Express was one of the most interesting trips I have ever made. I saw in succession the glorious snowy Alps mirrored in the sapphire lakes of Switzerland, the smiling vineyards, the towns and turrets of northern Italy. Then, after a night of oblivion, all this splendid color — this unmatched cultivation — were left

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

far behind, and I was back in the land of the patriarchs! Geographically, I suppose, I was in what is now called Jugo-Slavia, or old Servia; spiritually I was in the country of Abraham and Isaac. It seemed as if I was living the life described in the Bible. The inhabitants appeared to belong to the period when man's property is reckoned in flocks and herds. In the centre of every field was a well with a sweep like those I remember in the New England of my youth. Around this well were groups of peasants—men and women—watering their flocks. Shepherds and swineherds, goosegirls and drovers, were the only inhabitants to be seen. Hour after hour I looked in vain for a fruit tree or a cultivated garden patch.

As we approached Belgrade I tried vainly to recollect that elusive poem that begins:

‘An Austrian army awfully arrayed,
Boldly by battery besieged Belgrade,
Cossack commanders cannonading come,
Dealing destruction's devastating doom . . . !’

I could get no farther!

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Belgrade is beautifully situated upon two rivers, the Saar and the Danube. The Danube, by the way, is not blue at all, but a tawny river like the Tiber. We saw Belgrade from the train as quite an imposing city—a fine skyline with towers, domes, and spires. After Belgrade we got into a gently rolling country, and later passed through the Vale of Tempe—a beautiful gorge with a wide river running through the bottom, and splendid trees.

At Quevqueli, the frontier, the Greek custom-house officials were more inquisitive than elsewhere. They put me through the third degree. My beautiful new hatbox interested them especially.

‘What is that?’ I was asked.

‘A hatbox.’

‘Does it contain a hat?’

‘Yes.’

‘How many hats?’

‘Only one, and that is a very old one!’

Suppose they had investigated and found the helmet!

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Several of our Greek fellow travellers got out at Saloniki. One little lady whose acquaintance I had made seemed to be a great personage. There had been at least a hundred people to see her off at Paris, and there were more to greet her and her little son at Saloniki. She was dressed in the latest scant style. Her beautiful black hair had been cropped—an offering to the god of Fashion. The girls and women who come to Paris from all four quarters of the globe seem compelled to make this sacrifice of their tresses. A paraphrase of Browning's famous lines occurred to me:

Dear *live* women with such hair too!
What's become of all the gold
Used to hang and brush their bosoms?
I feel chilly and grown old.

On the 13th of June I made the following entry in my diary:

'The great plain about Saloniki seems desolate, and almost arid. Denby tells me that irrigation will make it very rich and fertile.

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

We passed a new village, a cluster of white-washed refugee houses surrounded by an encampment where the refugees are still living in tents. To suddenly plump a million and a half refugees — men, women, and children — into a country like Greece of five million inhabitants is not altogether a comfortable thing at first, and I well remember the description Madam Tsamados gave of Athens during the first months of this invasion. The theatres and public buildings were given over to these unfortunate people, and a family was considered lucky if it had for its home one of the boxes in the dress circle of the Opera House. We passed old railroad cars transformed into dwellings with swarms of little children playing about the steps. These improvised homes were brightened by flowers growing in the ubiquitous square tin boxes of the Standard Oil Company. In the beginning this Greek hegira was not a comfortable thing, but out of all this confusion and chaos there is coming a new era of Greek

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

prosperity. History repeats itself. Byron says:

“The best of prophets of the future is the past.”

‘The Turks, in expelling the Greeks and well-nigh exterminating the Armenians, are doing what the Spaniards did under Ferdinand and Isabella when they exiled the Moors who were the artists and artisans of the country and the Jews who were the business brains. Spain signed her own death-warrant then, and I trust that Turkey has done the same thing now.

‘Many cranes are flying over the fields—the cranes of Ibicus.

‘Still in Jugo-Slavia by the map! Now and again we pass fields of corn, oats, and barley. In the waste places between these rare cultivated areas, the land is a blaze of scarlet poppies and yellow mustard blossoms. Men and women are working together in the fields. I can see no fences, hedges, or sign of division between the farms. Compared to Eng-

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

land and to Italy the farming seems to be of the most primitive, and very roughly carried on. Passed a well where a lad was drawing water in a bucket, the sheep and the swine crowding all about him. It might have been the very scene of the Prodigal Son.

“Hereditary bondsman! know ye not,
Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow?”

‘*Vinkovci*: Made a long stop at the station at 10.30 A.M. There is a large restaurant here. The platform shaded by a roof was covered by tables from the restaurant crowded with people taking breakfast, and watching the Orient Express. One somehow fancies its arrival to be the great event of the day. There seemed to be no travellers among the people. The women wear large, loose kerchiefs of black or dull brown material over their heads, full black plaited skirts, and large aprons. The men’s garments are commonplace, with no distinctive feature, except those of the Servian soldiers walking up and down the platform in brown uniforms with scarlet pipings on cap

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

and tunic. Most of the people in the fields are barefoot, and all the children everywhere. I noticed some strange picturesque carts made of round poles woven together, giving a curious openwork effect. The people are fair and look like Slavs—not handsome, but rugged in appearance. The country this afternoon shows practically no fruit trees or vineyards.

‘One of the passengers suggested that this great plain is too hot to produce fruit, but I do not believe this. The fig tree certainly could be made to grow here. It looks to me as if all this desolation is due to a lack of skill in husbandry. We passed a shepherd playing on a pipe just now. Such a pretty lad!’

‘In the late afternoon we got into a gently rolling hilly country. In the distance the mountains—the tops lightly powdered with snow—Mount Olympus, a mass of blue with touches of white at the top where the snow lingers—august, deeply moving. This is sacred soil indeed—as Byron has it:

“Where'er we tread, 'tis haunted, holy ground.”

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

'This is the third and last day of a very comfortable journey. All yesterday I saw but one automobile—a very shabby affair driven by a ragged fellow. To-day at midday I have been spared the sight of any modern thing. In the fields the peasants are working with the most primitive tools: a man ploughing with a forked branch of a tree like one I remember seeing used in the Abruzzi Mountains, and before that painted in an Etruscan tomb. The water wheels are worked by beasts—mules or donkeys. Many peasants ride by on horseback. Three P.M. Thermometer 95. Four P.M. Thermometer 99.'

June 14th: 'The Petit Palais, Athens: This is the *hôtel de luxe*. Denby brought me to the door in a motor, and gave me into the hands of the night porter. The Petit Palais was formerly the home of Prince Nicholas and certainly has quite a palatial quality. A handsome, wide, marble staircase leads to my large, airy room. It was after midnight when I arrived, and there were only menfolk about

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

the hotel. A tall, angry-looking man dressed like a valet, but looking more like a *palikar*, took charge of me. Terrible of aspect and sparing of words, this man proved an efficient if fearsome chambermaid. He let down my mosquito bar and tucked it carefully about the bed; produced iced apollinaris water, and at half-past seven the next morning brought me a cup of coffee. He had been educated at Robert College. I never could quite make out his nationality, though he spoke perfect English, for he was very reserved and discouraged all my efforts at conversation.

'Among the few guests of the hotel is Mr. D——, an American business man from New York. His views of Athens are interesting. It could be made, he believes, a great tourist centre if there were any amusements. The Greeks themselves seemed to need no diversions. He found that the men he met were great talkers. Their social needs seemed to be satisfied by meeting in the afternoon and evening at the cafés and restaurants, where

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

they sit and talk endlessly together over a cup of coffee. There is no music in the squares or anywhere else, he said; no clubs or places of reunion; nothing even distantly approaching a Coney Island.

'My informant did not agree with me when I told him that in my views it was a sign of superiority that the Greek men still practice the lost art of conversation and are able to interest themselves in the discussion of local and world affairs.'

'Drove to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where I found Frank Kalopothakes now holding the office given him by Venizelos as Chief of the Government Press Bureau. He had been formerly head of the Associated Press, but felt called upon from patriotic motives to serve the Government when called by Venizelos to do so. I remember him well as a boy at Harvard when he used to pass his vacations at the house of my sister, Julia Anagnos. His second name is Demetrius. Only his sister and old American friends call him

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Frank. I had written from Paris that I would wire him the time of my arrival. He had been looking for my telegram, as he and Mr. Tsamados, Assistant Secretary of State, had planned to go down to Piræus to meet me, supposing I had meant to come by steamer.

‘This recalled that first never-to-be-forgotten visit to Athens with my mother, nearly fifty years ago, when I was in the early twenties, and the father of Kalopothakes met us at the Port of Piræus and drove us in a fine landau with two gray horses to Athens. It was in the month of April. We stopped on the way at a little inn where I picked my first Greek violets, and for the first time tasted *lukoumi* and *resinata*. I still remember the thrill I felt when we first caught sight of the Acropolis.

“Shrine of the mighty! can it be
That this is all remains of thee?” (BYRON.)

‘In the evening Daphne Kalopothakes took me for my first drive to get a near view of the Acropolis. It seems somehow too much hedged in by the new Athens—a city of

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

eight hundred thousand, some say a million, inhabitants. The great wonderful shrines seem to suffer from the pushing, bustling pressure of to-day. There is a scaffolding at the rear of the Parthenon, which is being piously and intelligently restored and the fallen columns raised.

'I am a little late, my friends tell me, to see Athens at its best. April, May, and the first half of June are better months for sight-seeing. There has been a long dry spell, and the streets are full of fine white dust. At the entrance of the hotel a servant stands always ready to wipe this thick white powder from the boots of any guest who may have been out walking. Lack of water is at present Athens's greatest defect. At some of the hotels it is often impossible for the guests to have a bath, as all the houses have a weekly ration of water which cannot be exceeded. At the Petit Palais we do not suffer this inconvenience, as Prince Nicholas, when he was building his home, carefully arranged

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

a private water supply which is amply sufficient.

'I met at the hotel Major Case, who represents the Ulan Company, and is in charge of the *magnum opus* they have undertaken of supplying Athens with water. He tells me that they have nearly completed the work of bringing the salt water from the sea for use in watering streets, and will next begin the almost more important labor of supplying the capital with good drinking-water. This is only the beginning of extensive irrigation work throughout Greece. I hailed the Major as Poseidon, the giver of water. He is a handsome man and the title suits him very well.

'I gather from talking with several active American business men that Uncle Sam is lending the skill and brains of his young engineers and the capital as well to carry on this great work of bringing water to this thirsty land. One of these gentlemen explained to me that the large financial interests which he represents, finding it difficult to

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

properly invest their money at home, were continually seeking safe investments outside of our country, and that Greece was considered a perfectly safe "chance."

'Mr. and Mrs. Case, who are my neighbors at the hotel, proved most friendly. The Major, this man of mighty affairs, who is constantly summoned to every capital in Europe for conferences with financiers and prime ministers, was not too proud to do me the service of filling my new fountain pen, and on departing left me the priceless gift of a small bottle of Waterman's Ideal Ink.

'I am learning what I can of recent events. The murder of my old friend and dancing partner, King George, while actually perpetrated by a Greek, is believed to have been instigated by Germany. King George was the open enemy of Germany, and is said not to have spoken to his German daughter-in-law for eight years. Germany knew that while King George lived, Greece would never join forces with her, so King George was foully

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

murdered—a quiet, good, greatly beloved man, and an accomplished farmer. This loss was a severe one, for to-day Greece needs above all else intelligent agricultural development. His son, King Constantine, was dominated by his German queen, Sophie. It was Venizelos who finally brought Greece into the War on the side of the Allies. He appears to be universally adored, and certainly is, by all the Greeks I have talked with at home, in England, and here. He lives in London now, and has practically retired from politics.

‘The present President, Pangalos, is a successful general and has the army behind him. He seems to be, in point of fact, Dictator, but the Greek people were so tired of the constant changes of government and of officials that they seem now quite content to have this dictatorship go on. Pangalos is handicapped by having a wife who can be of little help to him apparently—at least in social or public matters. His attempt to regulate the length of women’s skirts was a fail-

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

ure. His edict that they should be only seventeen centimetres from the ground proved unworkable because what was a suitable length for a short woman was not at all the correct length for a tall woman. Pangalos appointed a corps of policewomen to do the measuring of the petticoats, but the reform proved useless, and the edict remained in force only a few weeks.

‘Another measure of his—a forced loan—was not to be escaped. It was “put across,” as they say, overnight. One morning the Greek people were ordered without previous notice to cut off a quarter of all their bank notes except those of the smallest dimensions. A hundred-drachma piece became worth only seventy-five drachmas; a fifty-drachma note shrank in value to thirty-seven and a half. Some of those who talked with me resented the action; others accepted it as an inevitable misfortune.

‘After my drive I went out to the garden of the hotel. It was about half-past six, and

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

the *beau monde* of the small diplomatic circle of Athens and those people smart enough to play with them were assembled at the tables and taking tea, iced drinks, and cakes. The atmosphere of this group is just as I remember it in other days in Italy, England, or Washington.

‘The Petit Palais has a certain charm and distinction which sets it apart from the usual palatial hotel built as such. This really was built for a palace. There is taste and dignity and some artistic knowledge in the plan of house and garden. The fine marble steps and columns and the handsome green marble seats in the portico are genuine. There is no sham anywhere. My room seems twice as high as the usual high-ceiled room at home. There is a huge, handsome marble basin with hot and cold water and a capacious bath. Of all the changes I have observed on this trip what strikes me most is the introduction of running hot and cold water in the bedrooms of the hotels in all the cities I have visited.

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

‘I went to dine at the Grand Bretagne: dinner is not served at the Petit Palais, as there are too few guests to make it worth while, and both hotels are under the same management. I reached there at eight o’clock, which I thought a reasonable hour for dinner, but found that the dining-room did not open until nine, and the band did not begin to play until a quarter past. The corridors and porch were filled with little knots of people in evening dress. I took my seat near a group from one of the embassies who looked through me as if I had been made of glass. I felt very lonely and strange until a little, black Pekingese dog made friends with me.

‘His mistress, a strikingly handsome young woman in full evening dress, her arms covered with bangles, then spoke to me. We soon fell into pleasant talk, and I learned that she was Madam Aurea, the Spanish dancer—the only person in all that well-dressed crowd to welcome me, a stranger. I have always had a tender spot in my heart for

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

“The dancing girls of Gades.” I asked her if she knew my friend Pastora Imperia of Madrid.

“Yes, yes! I know her well. She is old, but she still dances! She married a *toreador*, but she was not happy with him, and they are divorced. For an artist, believe me, one's art is one's husband”—this with a deep sigh.’

June 15th: ‘At ten o'clock Minnie Kalopothakes called for me instead of her sister Daphne. We drove directly to the Ethnological Museum. The room where the mementoes of the War of Independence are kept is overcrowded and should be rearranged; the centre and place of honor is given to the Byron relics. In the middle stands the narrow iron bed on which he slept at Missolonghi; at the foot a case with his fine sword—the hilt of gold and blue enamel—and one of his duelling pistols—beautiful Toledo work—bronze inlaid with silver. There are many portraits of the poet, one in the helmet.

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

'In a place of honor very near the Byron relics hang my husband's (John Elliott) beautiful drawing of my father as a young man in the Albanian dress; a framed photograph of him as an old man — the one J. E. used for his figure of Time in the Boston Public Library ceiling — and two framed photographs of my mother, in youth and in age. These are all honorably placed. A young Greek from the States was showing his American wife the exhibits; a couple of peasant girls and groups of all sorts and conditions of men and women were passing continually through the galleries. This is a live, free public museum. I had not been inside five minutes before I made the decision: "This is the place for the Byron helmet."

'In the afternoon to tea at the Kalopothakes' house, number 50 Boulevard Amelias, just opposite the ancient Arch of Hadrian, a pleasant house with a courtyard and garden. The maidservant, a refugee named Melpomene, has the face of the Tragic Muse. I learned

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

that she had hidden her husband in a hole in the ground, and kept him alive by feeding him at night for six months. Then the Turks found and killed him.

‘I drove with Denby up Howe Street to the Gennadium. Howe Street, named for my father, is well laid out with locust trees planted on either side. At the end stands the Gennadium built of white marble from Mount Parmes. “Not,” Denby said regretfully, “from Pentelicus.” From which I gathered that the marble of Parmes was of inferior grade to the more famous article. The Gennadium is a handsome building; the library a large and beautiful room. It would delight Dr. Terry or any other bibliophile. It contains many rare editions and superb bindings. High up on the wall hang portraits of Gennadius and his English wife by Lazlo—both admirable—the one of Gennadius in a dress I suppose to be the old Greek diplomatic costume, a good deal like the one in my father’s portrait. Between the two Lazlos hangs a fair

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

portrait of the father of Gennadius in whose memory the collection of books was given to Athens.'

Wednesday, June 16th: 'At ten-forty-five Denby called for me in his motor and drove me to the French Embassy, where he had made an appointment for me with Count de Chambrun (great-grandson of Lafayette), from whom I wished to learn how to reach the Château Chavaniac. It is probable that in the whole of Greece to-day the only person who could give me just this information was the French Ambassador, who happens to be Lafayette's descendant. Again, there seems to me something almost providential in this, like my meeting with Mr. Reeves on the ship and with Denby on the train. M. de Chambrun was most kind. From what he told me it will be far best for me to go to Chavaniac directly from Greece, for it is far down toward the middle of France in the Auvergne, and it would have been a waste of time, strength, and money to go all the way up to Paris, and

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

then turn around and retrace my steps towards the south.

‘One of the pleasantest of the entertainments that has been given for me in Athens was a breakfast at the French Embassy. Count de Chambrun is a most gracious host. The appointments of the table were very elegant and the menu worthy of the great French traditions. The large company was made up of diplomats and intellectuals. To my amazement I found myself seated beside M. Renner, the German Ambassador, who is married to a charming English wife. He proved to be deeply interested in archæology, and I learned many things I did not know before from him concerning the work of the different archæological schools in Greece.’

June 17th: ‘To the National Museum, where I spent the morning amid those things of beauty I so well remember. There were many new additions to the collection. The fine bronze statue brought up from the bottom of the sea by the sponge divers when I

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

was here twenty years ago was then lying prone, and in the process of being skillfully repaired. The figure now stands resplendent at the end of a long gallery. I had always supposed it to represent Paris holding the apple, but I find many authorities believe it to be a statue of Perseus with the Gorgon's head in his extended hand. I still cling to the idea of Paris. The pose of the hand suggests the holding of an apple rather than the dreadful weight of Medusa's snaky locks.

'Near by is a recently discovered bronze statue of a youth known as the boy from Marathon. This too was found at the bottom of the sea near Sunium. It is half life-size, and of extraordinary beauty, belonging, I should think, to the best period of Hellenic art. I hazarded the guess that he had been throwing dice from the attitude of the outstretched palm, but am told that the authorities are not yet agreed on this point. It was impossible to procure any photographs of this lovely statue.

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

‘It is a pity that the labels on all the objects in the National Museum are written in Greek with the exception of the “finds” of the American and British Schools of Archæology, which have English labels. I lingered long among the Mycenæ treasures, discovered by Schliemann, of which the golden Vaphio Cups still seem to me the most marvellous objects. The modelling in high relief of the scenes—grazing cattle on one cup, a bull hunt on the other—is at once bold and exquisite. The Nestor Cup, double-hafted, with doves on the handles like the cup of Nestor described by Homer, is even more beautiful in form, but the workmanship of the Vaphio designs is unsurpassed.

‘From the tombs whence all these treasures came are many small round disks of pure, thin gold with butterflies, bees, and octopus designs in low relief. I could not learn their significance.

‘Apparently all the most important “finds” made by the different Schools of Archæology

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

are brought to Athens and placed in this Museum. There are some exceptions — the great Hermes remains at Olympia, but the famous Archaic bas-relief of Demeter, Persephone, and Triptolemus, which I first saw at the Temple of Eleusis, is now at the National Museum. This remains for me one of the most beautiful examples of the early Greek art. I studied very carefully the figures from the temple of Æsculapius at Epidaurus. My father in a letter to George Finlay, the historian, describes this ruin. Æsculapius was the son of Apollo by a mortal mother. His type closely resembles that used for the head and figure of Zeus, but not so noble, with more of benevolence and less of dignity in expression.

‘Most of the numerous statues and reliefs show him as an elderly man of benign countenance. His symbol is always the serpent. The figures from the pediment of the temple, though much broken, are of great beauty. The garments of the Nereids mounted upon

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

hippocamps show plainly that they have been made damp and heavy by the waters of the sea, while in the mounted figures of an Amazon on a horse and of a Victory, the wind-blown garments are quite as clearly indicated in the treatment of the drapery. It seemed almost miraculous that even in these broken fragments it was easy to trace the effect of the water on the dress of the water nymphs, and of the wind in the garments of the deities of wood and shore. The magic of the artist's skill kept me spellbound!

'The Temple of Æsculapius seems to have been a sort of health resort. Some students find a certain parallelism between modern Christian Science and the cult or cure at Epidaurus. Great stress was laid upon the spiritual and mental attitudes of the patients. They were encouraged to believe in their dreams, and evidence seems to show that while they slept hocus-pocus methods were employed to make impressions upon their minds.

'I lingered long studying the objects found

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

by Schliemann in the Tomb of Agamemnon at Mycenæ, near the Lion Gate. In a letter to George Finlay from my father dated 1829, he says, "Friend Finlay: After our parting at the queerest of queer old places, the Tomb of Agamemnon, I went on my way, not rejoicing, toward Corinth." In the year 1867, my parents and my sisters Julia and Laura went on a picnic close to the Lion Gate at this very spot, and nobody dreamed that just beneath them were the wonderful treasures which it took the skill and knowledge of a Schliemann to discover. I knew the Schliemanns well when I was in Athens in 1878, and remember Madam Schliemann's giving my mother a little clay cup from Agamemnon's Tomb.'

Mrs. Richards, in her 'Letters and Journals of Samuel Gridley Howe,' says: 'In 1867 I was in Greece with my father. It was the time of the Cretan war, and he had brought supplies to the starving women and children of Crete. We were at Argos, where many

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

of the Cretan refugees were congregated. Not far from the city were the ruins of Mycenæ, the twin lions guarding the gate. We visited the Treasury of Atreus, and never knew that the ground under our feet was full of gold cups and crowns and jewels, soon after to be dug up by Doctor Schliemann. A few miles farther on my father showed us, in a rough, tangled field, a low wall, built of huge Cyclopean blocks of stone. "This was Tiryns," he said. "It is close by here that we used to hide." Then he hunted, and found a passageway some twenty yards long and three feet high, built of stones closely fitting and slanting together to a ridge in the middle. This was one of the galleries leading to the fortress, he said; for Tiryns was a fortress when time was; and then he told us how, often and often, in the war-time, he and his comrades had taken refuge in this cavern, and had lain there safe, if not comfortable, while the Turkish horsemen scoured the plain in search of them.'

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

June 16th. 'To luncheon with Madam Tsamados. The other guests were Daphne Kalopothakes and Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Jaquith, of the Near East Relief. The company was interesting, the luncheon very good. Madam Tsamados tells me that her society, "The Fatherless Children of Greece," has become merged in the "Near East Relief." I can see that this may be expedient. I am a little sorry, as I always dread seeing the smaller associations for good works merging into the larger. For practical reasons it may be expedient—even absolutely necessary; but the influence of an individual as gifted and as generous as Madam Tsamados has a special personal flavor and is of very great value in any philanthropic effort. These vast confederations of philanthropy, as of business, seem to be the order of the day. From an economical viewpoint it doubtless is for the best, but I deny that economics are more important than ethics, and any economy that cuts out the personal equation is poor business. Madam

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Tsamados told Jaquith that I was almost the only person she had known in the United States who had worked hard for both the societies.

'I like the Jaquiths. She is Russian, though she speaks English like a well-bred American. She is a pale, Norse-looking, young woman, with flaxen hair, fair skin, and blue eyes. He seems good, capable, and energetic. . . . I learned to my surprise that Madam Tsamados is one half Russian. To my great disappointment she is called to Constantinople to see her father and help at the *accouchement* of a sister-in-law, so these two glimpses are all that I shall have of this delightful woman, to whose companionship in Athens I had looked forward so eagerly!'

Midsummer's Eve: 'Denby called for me; we stopped at the Grand Bretagne for the Stephen Bonsals, then drove to the Theatre of Dionysos for Aurea's dance. The beautiful color of the yellowed marble made a perfect background. I had hoped we should sit

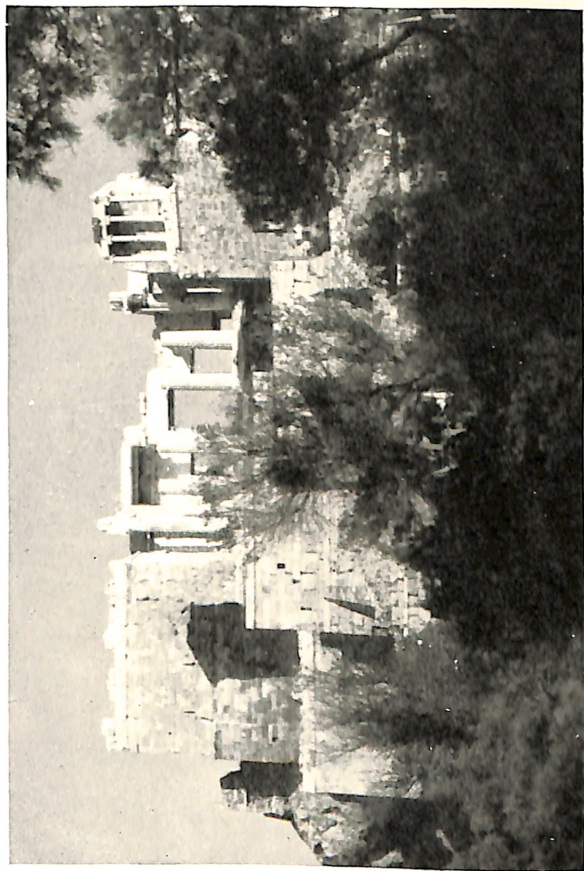
LORD BYRON'S HELMET

on the old marble seats of the theatre, but I suppose they are too ruinous for comfort, and rows of cane-bottom chairs had been set out for all those who had bought tickets. The *hoi polloi* watched the dancing from the top of the Arena free of charge. The most perfect of the rôles impersonated by Aurea was that of Demeter. She has spent a long time studying Greek art in order to create this dance, and has been greatly helped by M. Philadelphius, a Greek writer of authority on archæology. Aurea is tall and in figure and face well suited to the part of Demeter. She first entered the old classic theatre dressed in a long trailing Greek vesture of purple, black, and gold, and portrayed the mourning mother seeking for her lost daughter, Persephone. It was a very moving performance, full of passionate human feeling. Suddenly she disappeared behind a column in the ruins, it seemed for an instant only, and then returned all clad in shining white and gold, leading Persephone by the hand. Then followed the

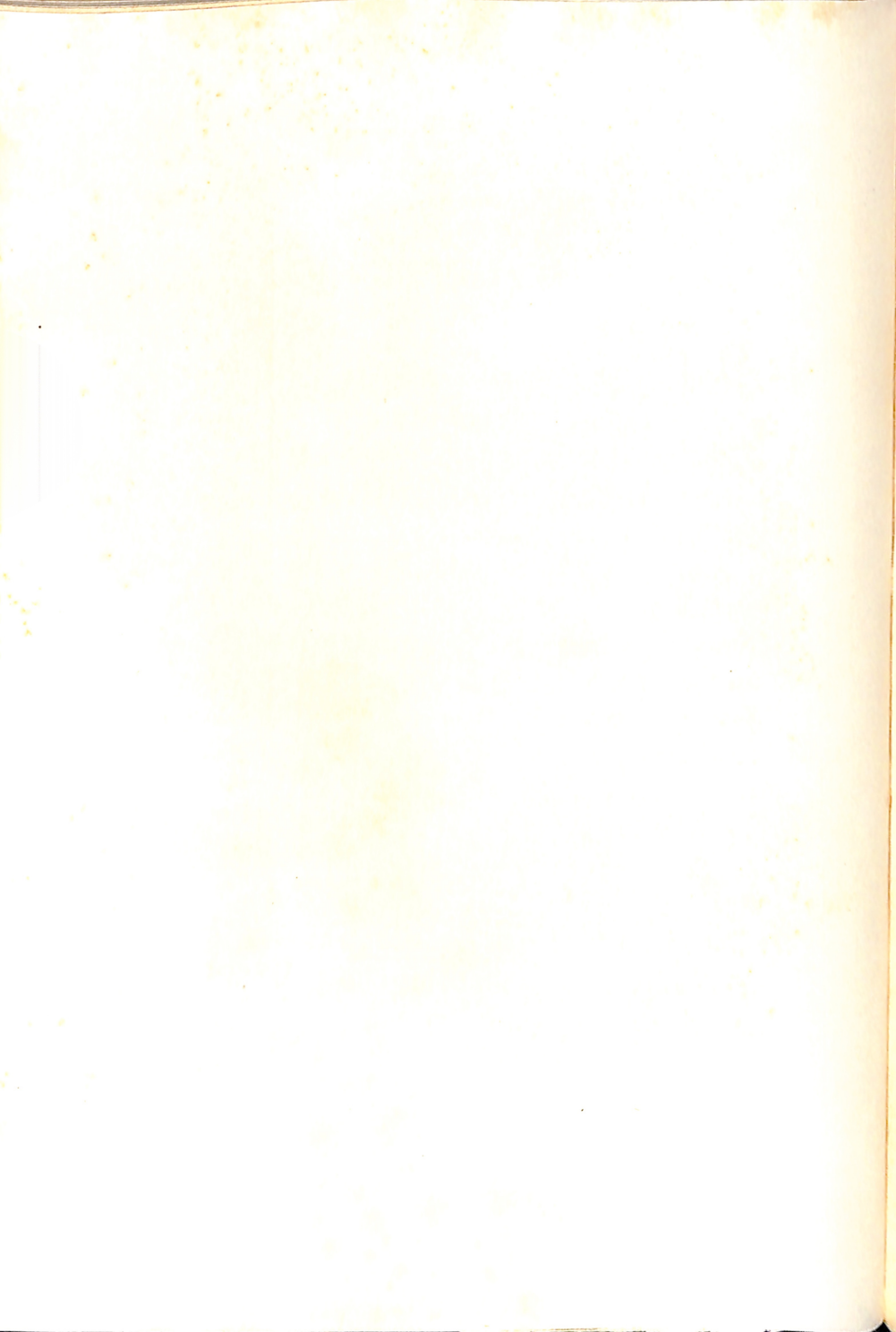
LORD BYRON'S HELMET ,

dance of rejoicing and the sowing of the wheat—ecstatic and graceful. The third phase showed Demeter gathering the harvest. She advanced majestically, her arms filled with golden wheat, which she scattered about her. Aurea tells me that she spent a long time in Egypt where she invented or perfected the “mummy dance.” She is anxious to come to America, but so far has found no suitable manager to arrange for a tour here.

‘After the performance we mounted to the steps of the Acropolis and looked up at the matchless perfection of the little Temple of Victory and at the glorious Parthenon. In the dusk it took on a faint rosy tint against a dull turquoise sky. The moon, rounding to the full, was a rich golden color. “This is Midsummer’s Eve!” one of us exclaimed, and then I understood why the place had seemed all alive with mighty shadows. I seemed to feel them all about me. Socrates spoke to me from his prison near by, and across there on



TEMPLE OF THE WINGLESS VICTORY, ATHENS



LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Mars Hill I seemed conscious of the presence of Paul of Tarsus. A wagonload of peasants passed below us; the lads among them were playing on stringed instruments and singing something that was lovely and a world away from jazz. The moon turned from gold to silver and I saw clearly the two crossed flags I can sometimes discern on its face; to me, the banner on the right looks like the flag of my country.'

June 23d: 'At half-past five in the afternoon I started with Denby and Countess Capodistria in a car belonging to one of the staff of the American Legation, carrying the precious helmet in the hatbox. I found a good audience awaiting us—about two hundred—the Cabinet Ministers, all the people I had met, and many more, the French Minister, Count de Chambrun, the Spanish Minister, all the English Embassy people and others of the Diplomatic Corps, the heads of the foreign archæological schools, and of the different museums. The grand-daughter of the "Maid

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

of Athens" was also one of the audience. Kalopothakes met me at the door and introduced M. Radoz, President of the Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece, who made a gracious speech of welcome, and then I had my little say.

'I asked them to go back with me to the 19th day of April, 1824, the day when Byron died — his life burned out like a too glowing flame that blazed its brightest for Hellas and kindled chivalrous young hearts all over the Christian world, most of all in England and America. I told them of my father's departure to join Lord Byron, and of his arrival in Missolonghi too late to see the poet of his adoration. I recalled my father's reading aloud to us children Byron's poems, and quoted the lines I remember best:

"The mountains look on Marathon
And Marathon looks on the sea.
And musing there an hour alone
I dreamed that Greece might still be free."

'Noticing that there were many young

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

people among the guests who looked like students from many different countries, I adjured them to kindle their torch at Athena's flame, and quoted the poet's immortal lines,

“Awake, not Greece — she is awake,
Awake my spirit!”

‘I recalled how the helmet had adorned my mother's salon as its choicest ornament. When I first remembered it, it still had a plume like that on Koloktrones' helmet which stood near by in a glass case. I spoke of the reproduction of the helmet in violets that my mother laid upon my father's coffin; of how the memory of it pervaded my whole life as a precious inheritance.

‘In closing, I spoke of the debt the civilized world owes Greece — a debt that can never be repaid — and of my shame on hearing discussions by some men of business and politicians of trifling material debts when the great debt of inspiration can never be paid.

‘I thanked the Kalopothakes by name and quoted, so that she too should have her part

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

in the little ceremony, a verse from a poem of my mother's:

“ Kingdoms have passed away since last we met.
See from their thrones of pride
Monarchs like spectres glide:
Love's law doth still abide,
Love reigneth yet!”

‘I then placed the helmet on Byron's little travelling-trunk that stands at the head of the camp bedstead. I did not realize until that moment what this parting would mean to me. While I did not falter in my belief that it now stands where it rightly belongs, I endured a pang of regret as I touched it for the last time, and turned away and left it with the other relics.

‘Driving home, we passed the Temple of Theseus, and I was reminded that the cities of Greece contended for the body of Byron as of old they contended for the birthplace of Homer, and that Athens had wished him to rest beneath the columns of the Temple of Theseus.’

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Again I quote a translation from 'Le Messager d'Athens' of June 23d, 1926:

'When he died, Howe bequeathed to his children the Greek tradition. Fifty years after his death his two daughters have made a gift to the Hellenic nation of the last Greek relic they possess — the helmet of Byron, which they have considered their most precious possession.

'This noble gesture has gone straight to the heart of the Greek people. The children and the grandchildren of the great Philhellene can be sure that the memory of Howe will be eternally cherished in Greece with the purest and most sincere gratitude.'

June 24th: 'With Mrs. Keyes, wife of our Senator from New Hampshire, and Mary Jaquith to visit the Near East Relief Orphanage at the Zappion, a great exhibition building given to Athens by two brothers called Zappa, and lent by the city of Athens to the Near East Relief. I have seen many other splendid public buildings which have been

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

given to Greece by wealthy Greek merchants, some of whom made their fortunes in America, and some in England. The orphanage is in charge of Mrs. Bassett, a fine, handsome California woman.

‘In this large building five hundred refugee children are now housed. There were formerly over a thousand, but the number has gradually decreased. Some of the children have been sent to relatives; some have been adopted; some apprenticed to various trades. These latter are visited every three months by an inspector. One of the most remarkable features of this work has been the tracing of lost children back to their relatives by the Near East Relief and the Red Cross. As the horde of fugitive refugees poured into Greece, each one was asked to give his name, and the address of the place he came from. These lists of both organizations have proved of extraordinary value in tracing the lost children and reuniting broken-up families.

‘The schoolrooms at the Zappion in some

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

curious way faintly recall the old-fashioned American country schools. One department is devoted to the education of the deaf children; another to the blind. The superintendent, naturally proud of her great work, showed us every branch of it in great detail. In the schoolroom for the blind, especially, everything seemed perfectly familiar to me; all the apparatus of teaching; the slates for ciphering; the sets for Braille; the books in raised type — all the tools of the teaching trade. Mrs. Keyes was rather pressed for time, as she had an important appointment with some of the government officials, and I tried to hurry our visit a little for her sake. The teacher of the blind school, a young Armenian woman, spoke good English. She was explaining, I thought, rather unnecessarily in detail her various processes of teaching.

““All this is well known to me,” I told her, “because I was born in an Institution for the Blind.”

““May I ask what institution?”

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

““Perkins.”

‘She almost fell into my arms as she cried out, “Perkins! That is my school. I studied there. I am a graduate. I owe everything that I know to Perkins.”’

‘The effect upon me was almost miraculous; I was quite overcome to find here a graduate of my father’s famous school bringing to Athens the harvest of his life’s greatest labor and toiling for the benefit of the refugee children of Greece! I was deeply moved also by music of the band—a group of youths who played on stringed instruments—chiefly violins, guitars, mandolins. These musicians were all blind.

‘We then went out into the central courtyard of the Zappion where we heard the brass band, made up of very young musicians who played, for their age, extremely well. Several of the boys were dressed in the old Albanian costume—fustanella, embroidered leggings, and fez. They danced the national Greek dances for us with great spirit. The son of

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Mrs. Keyes and his friend, a young man from Providence, had brought kodaks and photographed the boys, making one picture of me standing between two lads in the Greek dress.

‘The Jaquiths hope when the Near East Relief work comes to an end, as it must before many more years have passed, to leave in Athens as a permanent memorial of their work a school for the blind, and one for the deaf and dumb. I promised to do all in my power to forward this admirable plan.

‘Hurried home to dress for luncheon at the Italian Embassy with the Brambillas—she was born Julia Meyer. They are both perfectly charming. All of the company were of the Diplomatic Corps save the Countess Capodistria and myself. I wore Queen Margherita’s jewel. Brambilla asked to look at it, and I told him the circumstances of the Queen’s giving it to me after she came to see my husband’s work in his Roman studio as a memento of her visit and her appreciation of his talent. The blue enamel having been a

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

little chipped, I asked Brambilla where I could send it to have it mended.

'He said, "My wife will take it to Rome for you and have it repaired."

'I took off the jewel and gave it to Madam Brambilla, telling her that I took all responsibility and risks if anything happened to it. The Brambillas are a delightful couple. She looks exactly like her father, George Meyer, my distant kinsman, and has his genial smile and cordial manner. She gave me an armful of American newspapers, and sent me magazines and a book by François Coppée to read on the train. Brambilla is a most interesting man. He looks sadly out of health, as I fear he is. [He has since died.]

'At five, Leslie Kosmopoulos (née Walker) called to take me to see Madam Sikelianos. She was before her marriage Eva Courtland Palmer, and I remember her well as a child in Gramercy Park, New York, at the meetings of a literary club of which Mr. Palmer was the president; I think it was called the Nineteenth

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Century. We found her in the small house near Faleron, where she is now living, although her real home, she tells me, is at Delphi, where her husband, the Greek poet, Angelo Sikelianos, is busy with the preparations for a festival to be held in the classic theatre of Delphi a year from now, when the "Prometheus Bound" by Æschylus will be produced.

'I was somewhat startled by a vision of a woman in a classic dress of soft, coarse, yellow silk, made without sleeves; bare feet; sandals; her tawny hair hanging in two long, heavy braids on either side of her face. I had heard much of her wonderful weaving of silks, but nothing I had heard prepared me for them. The looms filled one side of the house. Eva showed me the silk dresses which she herself had woven. There must have been about seventy garments. They are of every color; the designs are woven in the borders. The silk is of the heaviest description; the colors very beautiful; the designs worthy

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

of all the rest. These dresses will be worn by the young girls she is training for the chorus of the Greek classic play she and her husband are arranging as a pageant. Some of these girls will take the part of the Oceanides. She has gifted pupils among the dancers, and other scholars whom she is teaching to weave. The silks certainly are as handsome as any I ever saw woven on hand looms.

'I was much interested in the Delphic Festival, and asked her how she was advertising it. She gave me a fine illustrated pamphlet, printed in Greek, German, French, and Italian, which she is sending to students and universities all over the world. She feels this is the best way to make the event known. She said the guests would come on large tourist steamers to Delphi for the events of the Festival, which would last two days. During the daytime, lunch-rooms and rest-rooms will be provided for them at Delphi, and they will go back down the mountain to their steamers to sleep at night. I promised, if possible, to

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

come back for the Festival myself, and in any case to try to send other people.

‘At seven-thirty Gorge Kosmopoulos, the Greek husband of my new friend, arrived with two motors, and we started for our evening picnic — Eva Sikelianos, Gorge and Leslie Kosmopoulos, a pretty young Greek girl named Nausicaia, and a group of retainers whose car was filled with baskets of provisions and wine and soft woolen blankets and rugs. We drove along the seashore for about two hours until we reached a wild and beautiful spot where a grove of wind-twisted pines grows close down to the edge of the sea. Gorge made me very comfortable by spreading several of the beautifully woven Cretan-wool blankets under my feet and over a low, thick, juniper bush, which he made into a sort of throne upon which I sat. His kindness and solicitude for my comfort was very touching. He took off his own overcoat and spread it behind me as an extra shield from the wind which blew across the Ægean Sea with quite

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

a shrewd twinge. Gorge is the grandson of a famous old Cretan chieftain, one of Kolokotrones' men, who might easily have been a companion in arms with S. G. H. a century ago.

'The banquet—I cannot call it less—was truly magnificent. The Greek dishes I found delicious. Lamb roasted in herbs, chicken of the tenderest, Greek olives, salad, sweetmeats, served course after course. There came a pause when I thought that the feast was over, but it seems that we were only waiting while the retainers took the plates down to the sea and washed them, and then we started all over again with ice cream, brought out in an American freezer, and a fresh supply of goodies and cakes.

'This was in strong contrast to the meal described by my father in his journal a hundred years before, when he and the hungry patriots were thankful to feed upon sorrel, snails, and roasted wasps. The moon rose high. The little waves of the Ægean broke

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

close beside us with a gentle rhythm, and the wind in the twisted pine trees breathed its eternal song.

““What can I do for you?” said Gorge, for the twentieth time, after he had lavished every care and attention possible for my comfort and fed me not wisely, perhaps, but too well.

““You can sing for me,” was my answer.

“He refused. I begged, backed up by the others who urged him on with the assurance: “We will all join in the chorus.”

“After much persuading, Gorge lifted up his voice, and sang song after song—a whole cycle of the old sagas of the time of Kolokotronis and the intrepid Cretan patriots. The music, more like a Gregorian chant than anything else, was wild and tragic. The strophe and antistrophe was a sort of survival of the classic chorus. Once the singers had begun these strange crooning chants, it seemed as if they could not stop. Their voices blended with those of the wind in the pine trees and the

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

waves on the shore and recalled another unforgettable scene, the banquet given to my mother by the old Cretan chieftains some of whom remembered my father in the flesh. That was in the year 1878. I saw again in fancy the magnificent old Cretan chieftain who said to me in telling me of the old time: "Though I am more than eighty years old, these hands are still strong enough to strangle a Turk."

'It was after one o'clock at night that Gorge returned me pretty well tired out to the Petit Palais, and the unforgettable evening came to an end when my fierce *palikar* turned on the lights and opened the door of my room as he looked disapprovingly at his watch to show me how late the hour was.'

June 26th: 'Last day in Athens. Had to keep an early date with Minnie K. to draw money, pay my passage, and do my last errands. At nine o'clock though half dead with fatigue of these last days, I was in Constitution Square, and managed to attend to all the many details that had to be got through with

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

before my departure. I reached the hotel at twelve-thirty and left word at the desk that I was not at home to any one. I still had all my packing to do. In spite of my orders to be left alone, the *palikar* kept knocking at my door and bringing in package after package. Gifts from many friends seemed to pour in. There came from the Countess Capodistria a charming *bonbonnière*, a covered bowl of the blue-and-white Greek majolica ware I had so much admired; from Mrs. Jaquith a large packet of delicious nougat; from Leslie and Gorge Kosmopoulos a quaint wooden jug, carved from cedar, cut by hand with a penknife by an Arcadian. This jug is used for drinking-water to which it gives a faint, delicious flavor. Daphne sent handsome embroideries and drawn work made by some refugees; Madam Valsamachi a curious bronze sword guard, which she believed to be Egyptian.'

[Since my return to America I have received the beautiful decoration of the Order of the Golden Cross of the Redeemer, awarded

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

me by the Greek Government in recognition of my having taken back Lord Byron's helmet to Greece.]

'In the late afternoon I managed to be ready to receive the farewell visits from friends, old and new. Among others was Madam Tsipouras, an American lady, married to a Greek general, who is a great favorite of Pangalos, the Dictator. She told me much of her work among the soldiers, and of their devotion to her and to her husband. I have been in despair of finding a place for my embroideries, but luckily Mr. Cassimatis, a Greek friend from Newport, volunteers to carry them back to the States for me. I brought very little luggage with me, and the hatbox which once contained the helmet is filled to overflowing with the keepsakes my new friends pressed upon me.

'At nine o'clock Denby called for me and we went to dine at the Grand Bretagne with the Stephen Bonsals. After dinner we drove up to the Acropolis. Every month it is open

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

to the public during the three or four nights before and after the full moon. I made myself as comfortable as I could on the steps, and watched the gay procession of young people passing in and out of the great shrine. Emerson's matchless lines echoed through my mind:

“Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,
As the best gem upon her zone.”

‘There were very few strangers among these late visitors, and I heard nothing but Greek spoken, except by one party of Germans. We lingered long, and it was one o'clock before I got to my room. I took leave of Denby with regret, and told him that I hoped I should see him again in America. He smiled mischievously and said, “We shall meet before then.”’

‘After dinner at the hotel, I took leave of Aurea, the Spanish dancer, who had paid me the compliment of being present at the presentation of the helmet, and spoke kindly about my speech.’

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

June 27th. 'At 8 A.M. Mr. Cassimatis called for my package of embroidery. At nine o'clock Denby, who had left me at the hotel at midnight, arrived with an armful of superb roses. He was fresh and charming, dressed all in white, but his pretty eyes looked as if they had not had enough sleep. The kindness and helpfulness of this young friend have made my stay in Athens successful and comfortable in a thousand ways. Soon after, Kalopothake called for me, and we drove to his house to pick up Daphne, my travelling companion for half the journey back to France.

'At two o'clock we sailed from Piræus on board the Greek steamer *Micale* for Brindisi. We have each of us a good stateroom — clean and airy — but the narrow beds are hard as a rock. We are only about twelve first-class passengers. The meals are good. I have the seat of honor at the right of the Captain, a large, jovial soul, who puts his own private saloon at our disposal for a sitting-room. He

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

has three tame kittens who lie at his feet during meals. Between the courses he amused us by tying a bit of paper to the tail of one of the kittens, and all three ran round and round playing with it. The sea is like changeable silk of beautiful colors; the moonlight magnificent.

'The first thrill came with the Saronic Gulf; then Megara and the Isthmus of Corinth; through the Corinth Canal; then to Loutraki; Corinth; Acro-Corinth; Epirus; and Hexamilia, two colonies of refugees founded by my father a century ago; the mountains of Silene and Arcadia:

"I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture." (BYRON.)

'Apollo came to Delphi escorted by dolphins. We were escorted by dolphins — or their modern equivalent — a school of joyous, gambolling porpoises. Some of my fellow travellers had great difficulty in embarking on account

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

of a new edict of Pangalos decreeing that all Greek citizens leaving the country must pay ten pounds English money. This law had been put in force overnight, as it were, and a lady passenger who was a member of the family of one of the Cabinet ministers had not even heard of it. The idea behind this unpopular edict is to force well-to-do citizens to patronize the Greek watering-places instead of those in the various European countries where a great number of Greeks take their vacations. There was much anger among the passengers who were held up by this apparently arbitrary rule.'

[I have since thought that taken in connection with the forced loan it might have contributed to the downfall of Pangalos.]

June 28th: 'I thought I never should get dressed! Good coffee, bread and butter, and quince marmalade served in my cabin. I have managed somehow to sleep, though much disturbed by a long stop and the discharging of cargo at Patras. Lunch was served at

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

eleven so that the passengers might go on shore at Corfu, and see the famous island. As we were bargaining with a chauffeur on the dock, one of the guides of the place addressed me with a deep bow and these words:

““You are the lady who brought Lord Byron's helmet back to Greece. You must allow me the honor of escorting you to see all the sights.”

‘I turned to Daphne and asked, “How could he know?”

““Every newspaper in Greece has had your portrait and one of the helmet during the last few days.”

‘Corfu is a paradise. My errand here was to visit Mr. John Parmenides, the head of the Anagnostopoulion, the agricultural school my brother-in-law, Michael Anagnos, founded and endowed. This school, which has lately been opened, can accommodate only sixty pupils, and we all are anxious to enlarge the scope of its work. I believe this to be the first agricultural school in modern Greece.

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

We found that the Parmenides Villa was an hour away from the landing, but our dear captain had promised not to sail without us, so we started for this drive, which is among the most beautiful I have ever seen, ranking with the Corniche and the Sorrentine Drives.

‘Contrasted with the parts of Greece I have seen, Corfu seems miraculously fertile — vineyards, orchards, fig trees, fields of corn (very uncommon in this part of the world), beautiful green verdure and superb flowers: allamandas, red, pink, white, and faintly flushed; clematis and passion-flower vines clasp every porch or gateway. Splendid roads wind up and down the steep hills.

‘Royalty is out of fashion and out of favor to-day, but in common justice I must note in passing that where royalty has tarried any length of time certain beneficent results seem to remain behind them. This Corfu, one of the world's gems, owes much to the royalties who for generations have made it a refuge from the cares and troubles of their lives.

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

We passed the Villa Achilleion, built by the Empress, Elizabeth of Austria, who was foully murdered in Switzerland in 1898. I had a sudden vision of her, and the gracious bow and smile with which she greeted Isabel Anderson and me just two years before her death when we were making a driving tour in Bavaria.

'We had started to drive to Hohenschwangau one summer morning, and she had started to make the journey on foot, accompanied only by her Greek tutor. We saw them leave the hotel, and a little later passed them deep in the forest. She recognized us with a lovely smile. The Empress was tall and lithe—a perfect Artemis in figure and bearing—her long, magnificent hair was worn in thick braids wound about her head. She carried a stick, and walked lightly and gracefully as a wood nymph. After her death, the fair garden she made in Corfu became the property of the German Kaiser, and here he came often to meet his sister, Queen Sophia of Greece,

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

and plan the policy which, whether for good or ill, caused the downfall of the dynasty.

'Mon Repos, the villa once the home of the Empress Eugénie, later became the property of some of the Greek royalties. I do not wonder that people with the power to choose and create beautiful country homes have chosen Corfu for their pleasure ground. We passed many picturesque figures: peasant women wearing the quaint, enormous red and black headdresses of the locality; an old Greek papa, with a patriarchal black beard and tall cap, seated sideways on a donkey. We saw only two motors during the whole excursion. Most of the people we met were taking their Sunday outing on foot or on horseback.

'We reached the house of M. Parmenides on foot after a long, hard climb. Our chauffeur, a surly fellow, had insisted that there was no other way. The villa lies along a steep hillside. We were cordially welcomed by our host and his English wife. They made us sit down to lunch with them, and treated us to

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

pears, peaches, apricots, and figs — all grown on their estate. We tasted a delicious dessert made of curds and preserved plums called "Yaourti," and I had my last cup of Turkish coffee.

'I asked if it were possible for me to visit the Anagnos school, which is near Janina, but found that it would be inexpedient on account of the unsettled state of that part of the country. Some travellers had been attacked by brigands shortly before.

'The Parmenides' house is large and comfortable like an English dwelling, with fine cedar panelling and ceiling beams. Our hosts invited me to make them a visit, but I felt it wiser not to linger. They asked me to return next year and make the expedition to visit the school. I trust I may do so. Mrs. Parmenides brought me a letter from my mother inviting her to lunch, and one from my niece, Betty Richards, who, she said, I resembled. Mr. Parmenides gave me an ancient letter-book of my father's containing many letters

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

from him written to Edward Everett, George Finlay, and other distinguished Americans pleading the cause of the Greek patriots. The first is dated "Egina, December 8th, 1828."

'The paper on which these letters are written is very delicate and must be carefully handled to be deciphered, but the material promises great interest. This last and most precious gift of all was one more link in the chain of circumstances that made my journey so full of interest.'

While in Greece I visited several of the refugee settlements established by the Near East Relief, and was strongly reminded of my father's work a hundred years ago, when he acted as America's almoner. I quote again from his journal:

'*Ægina, November 12th, 1828.* After a tedious delay by calms, we arrived this morning off this island, and without bringing the vessel to anchor, I rowed on shore with the intention of waiting on the President with my

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

letters, and requesting his advice about debarking my cargo; with the wish and intention, however, of making this island my headquarters provided there were no material objections, and provided that the objects of the Committee could be as well accomplished by remaining here as elsewhere.'

'Wednesday, November 19th. Finished unloading the brig. . . . The more I think of my plan of employing the poor, the more it pleases me; for in reality, all the misery now existing arises from want of employment. Why, then, should I give away these donations to be consumed in idleness, when by proper use of them I can give employment to hundreds in some ways that keep them out of idleness and result in some permanent public good, making a road, draining a marsh, building a hospital, school, or something of the kind? I should like best to get a grant of land from the Government sufficient for the maintenance of a hospital by its rent, then to build the hospital by the labour of the poor, and support

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

it by its own income. If they will give me some marsh to drain and have in perpetual enjoyment for the maintenance of a hospital, I will so arrange it in a year as to give my accounts to the Committee and say, "Lo, I have given all to the poor, and return you the same value that you committed to me. Do as you choose with it!"

'*December 8th.* Returned from my tour, and having concluded to defer any distribution in the Peloponnesus for some weeks, I turned my attention to the state of the poor refugees from Athens, Roumelia, and the islands of Scio, Crete, etc., who are here.

'After revolving in my mind various plans of relief to these suffering beings, I have resolved to commence a work upon which I can employ four or five hundred persons, give them their bread, and at the same time benefit the public; viz, the repairing of the port here, which, from the destruction of the piers and the accumulation of mud and filth, is reduced to a state nearly resembling a marsh

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

upon its border, preventing the boats from approaching near the shore and giving out an unpleasant and unwholesome odour.'

'*December 20th.* Added this morning a hundred women, thus making four hundred persons who receive their daily rations of four hundred and fifty okes of meal, and are employed in loosening and disengaging the huge blocks of stone from the mass of rubbish with which the centre of the ancient temple is filled, then in carrying the stones down to the shore and leaving them for the masons to begin work with on Monday. They are getting on cheerfully; the only discontent seems to be that all are not employed.

'The inhabitants of Megara, who have suffered exceedingly, not only from the Turkish invasion, but from the frequent passing of Greek troops through their villages, are now in an unhappy state, having just returned to their homes, but so destitute that they have no seed to sow, and suffer otherwise from want.

'Now the crops which Megara produces

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

most abundantly are rye and beans. Beans I have in plenty, and as the two kinds are equally high-priced here, but the native variety not so good for seed, I resolved to sell mine and buy an equal quantity of Egyptian beans. This resolution filled the representatives of Megara with joy, and they were profuse in their expressions of gratitude and praise. I told them, however, that I did not mean to give them the seed outright, but that every man who received a portion should give his note promising at the harvest to pay one third of the crop for the support of a Lancastrian school in their village. The simple fellows were astonished, and crossed themselves several times, expressing the greatest joy at so "holy a thing," and wondered, they said, that it had never entered their heads before. I shall go myself, if possible, to Megara, and either give out the seed in this way, or upon a yearly interest to be paid to the school-master and secured by the Government. Thus I shall be husbanding the talent confided to

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

me to the most advantage, and doing a far more permanent and real good than by merely giving it away.

‘Everything succeeded according to my wishes. The seed was divided among four hundred families, the poorest in that region; they immediately sowed it, and . . . in a few days it began to shoot. . . .

‘I have thus, at an expense of less than \$100, restored to cultivation much land lying waste from want of seed. I have given occupation and hope to four hundred families, before sitting with clasped hands in listless and despairing idleness. I have every prospect that this money will produce seventy-five thousand okes of beans, which at a moderate price should bring \$4,000, and give over \$1,300 for the support of a school; or which I can give to the same poor if they should be then in distress. The letter of thanks which they sent me is very affectionate, and my agent informs me that when the Demogerontes, or Commission of old men,

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

were about to write it, they sent out a crier to notify the people, who all assembled and shouted that it should be written in the strongest terms of gratitude and praise.'

The nineteenth century having done something in the way of getting rid of kings, dictators, and other absolute rulers; the twentieth century seems to be putting them back again. Italians of every class acclaim Mussolini, the man who has led Italy out of the wilderness, and now the Mediterranean peoples, tired out with political strife, seem to be turning again towards absolute authority and one-man power. Spain has its de Rivera; Turkey has Kemal Pasha; Greece had Pangalos yesterday and has Kondylis to-day. All are looking for their Mussolini. A Mussolini, however, like a Napoleon, is not born oftener than once in a century. General Kondylis, who has very recently usurped the place of Pangalos, was formerly the Minister of War. He is an able soldier who rose from the ranks, fought fifty

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

battles, and was in command of the Allied forces in Saloniki. He announces that general elections will be held in October.

I sincerely trust General Kondylis may prove the ideal leader of the Greek people, but I cannot deny that while in Greece I met some royalists who longed for the return of a more stable form of government. More and more the solid business men of Greece long for peace and quiet to carry out their gigantic task of building up the commerce and developing the agriculture of the country. How well they are succeeding in spite of these 'many excursions and alarms' is proved by the fact that last July there were more ships in the Port of Piræus than in that of Constantinople.

Since the foregoing was written, the October elections have been held, and the good faith of Kondylis has been proved. A Republican majority was returned. Thirty representatives of the refugee population were

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

elected, all of them Republicans. The former President, Admiral Coundouriotis, has been recalled with that popular elder statesman beloved by all parties, Alexander Zaimis, as Prime Minister. An earnest effort has been made to reconcile all the different political parties: Republicans, Royalists, and others, and a coalition government has been formed, which so far has functioned very well. English and American capital continues to underwrite various important public works. One great company has undertaken the *magnum opus* of irrigating the vast plain of Saloniki, and another corporation has undertaken to provide the traction power for various public utilities in Athens.

One of the results of the evacuation of Asia Minor by Christian peoples, following the defeat of the Greek army in 1922 by the Turks, has been the establishment in Greece of a thriving rug-weaving industry where none existed before. To-day Greece is producing far more rugs than Turkey. The Near

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

East Relief, in training orphans to self-support, has not overlooked rug-weaving, and hundreds of America's little wards are being trained in this ancient and profitable art.

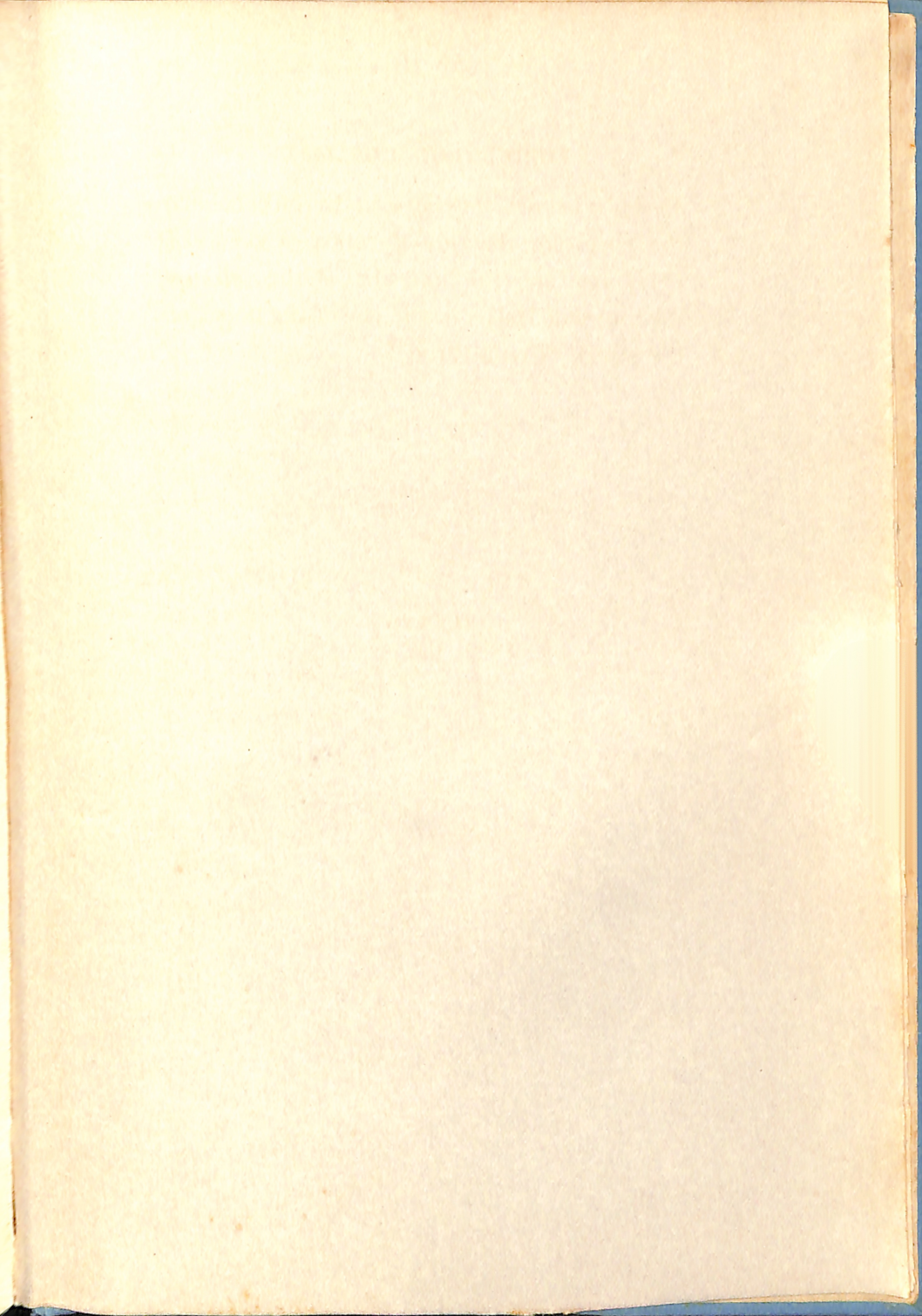
Many people hold that there is greater freedom to-day in England than in the United States of America. Yet England is a kingdom and we are a republic, and I am beginning to question whether the form of government is so very important a matter as it once seemed to me. In the end what counts is the nation, the character of the people, its ideals, and its aspirations. Judged by this standard the Greek people still retain their ancient virtues—sobriety, thrift, industry, and a certain proud independence of character beyond all praise.

In spite of the intensive campaign of defamation which has been carried on against Greece, a propaganda that equals if it does not exceed any other of the post-war propagandas which confuse the mind of the average man in the street, I ask you to remember the motto on

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Byron's helmet, 'Believe in Byron'; believe the poets, for they are the men of vision of every age, and the hope that Byron felt for the future of Hellas is still one of the hopes of the world: 'Crede Biron'!

THE END





	DATE DUE	
--	----------	--

949.506 E46C		
Elliott, Maude Howe.		
AUTHOR		
Lord Byron's helmet.		
TITLE		
REPLACEMENT		3978
DATE LOANED	BORROWER'S NAME	DATE RETURNED
2 Feb '47	Mrs. Sperry	
20 Mar '50	Miss M. C. Calhoun	
APR 1 '66	Mrs. F. F. Barger	

949.506 ELLIOTT, MAUDE HOWE
EL

LORD BYRON'S HELMET

Library
Society of The Four Arts
Palm Beach, FL 33480



